

Jordan Times

An Independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الرأي»

PLO disputes Kuwaiti charges

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Monday sharply disputed allegations by Kuwait that it had sent 2,500 supporters into the emirate to "terrorise" Kuwaitis during the Iraqi occupation. The PLO, in a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, said it had been trying to show restraint in polemics with Kuwait at the United Nations "despite the barbaric acts perpetrated against our people." Kuwait's U.N. representative Mohammad Abulhasan last week said the PLO had sent to occupied Kuwait some 2,500 people who were deployed at intersections and checkpoints. The PLO's U.N. observer, Nasser Al Kidwa, had previously called for an end to death sentences in Kuwait against alleged collaborators, an issue that has disturbed human rights groups around the world. Mr. Kidwa, in Monday's letter, said the PLO during the occupation had dispatched to Kuwait only 45 officers and soldiers to guard the Palestine embassy and other Palestinian institutions.

Rush to meet Gorbachev in London

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush will host a working lunch for Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in London on July 17 and 18, a White House spokesman said. The two leaders will discuss the broad range of issues on the agenda. The two leaders will meet following the conclusion of the summit economic summit of the seven major industrialised nations. Mr. Gorbachev has been invited to address members of the group, known as the G-7, after their meeting and present his case for Western aid and investment to help Soviet economic reform. The Soviet leader has also scheduled bilateral meetings with Britain's Prime Minister John Major and Japan's Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu during his trip. Mr. Bush and Mr. Gorbachev will also hold a formal summit in Moscow this year to sign a strategic arms reduction treaty and discuss both countries' long-range nuclear weapons policies. The two nations have been unable to reach a final accord, however.

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AMMAN TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1991, THU AL HIGEH 20, 1411

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Al Baiy meeting opens on July 2

AMMAN (I.T.) — Prominent Islamic scholars from the Arab and Islamic world are gathering in Amman to take part in the eighth conference of the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilization Research (Al Baiy Foundation) which will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein. According to an Al Baiy statement, King Hussein will deliver his Royal Highness' Crown Prince Hassan to chair the sessions which will be held between July 2 and 7. The participants are expected to review several studies related to Islamic civilization in implementation of resolutions and recommendations passed by the Al Baiy's seventh conference. Apart from reviewing nine studies in Islamic work, the participants will also hold a special session to review a report on Al Baiy's activities and achievements in the past two years. They will also review a concise report about its activities in the past decade.

Kurds accuse Turkish police of killings

BRUSSELS (R) — Kurdish guerrillas Monday denied responsibility for an ambush last week in which a Turkish mayor and four guards died and accused Turkish police of staging the operation themselves in disguise. Yakup Kara, mayor of Hilal township in Sinjar province, near the Iraq border, and the guards were killed on Friday as they were going to work by car. "This carnage was carried out by individuals disguised as guerrillas," said a statement issued in Brussels on behalf of the European section of the National Liberation Front of Kurdistan. It said guerrillas would have been unable to carry out the attack in an exposed spot on a national highway near a police station in broad daylight. "We say the assassination was carried out by the DGS (Turkish special forces)." Kara said.

Gulf Air resumes flights to Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — Gulf Air, the airline of Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, flew to Beirut Monday for the first time in almost 16 years. The Gulf News Agency said Gulf Air officials also flew to Beirut to celebrate the reopening of the route, which closed down in September, 1975, shortly after civil war broke out in Lebanon. The airline will fly to Beirut from the Gulf five times a week. Eleven other foreign airlines have resumed flights to Lebanon.

India devalues rupee

NEW DELHI (AP) — India's central bank devalued the rupee by about nine per cent Monday, in a move apparently geared towards negotiating a multibillion dollar loan from the International Monetary Fund. The devaluation came as India's 10-day-old government faced a foreign currency crisis which has left the treasury with hard cash to pay for less than one month's imports. The Reserve Bank of India devalued the rupee by 9.5 per cent against the dollar, 9.7 per cent against the yen, 8.7 per cent against the British pound and nine per cent against the German mark.

Muscle magazine names Shamir 'man of the year'

TEL AVIV (R) — A U.S. body-building magazine has named Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, 75, its man of the year, an Israeli spokesman said Monday. But spokesman Avi Pazner said the award was probably more for the magazine's prowess in politics rather than athletics. Dan Lurie, publisher of Muscle Training Illustrated, told officials he would present the award next week to Mr. Shamir, leader of Israel's most right-wing government. Israel Radio said the award had gone previously to actors Clint Eastwood and Johnny Weissmuller, Ronald Reagan and — in 1985 — then-Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

Lebanese army clashes with Palestinian fighters

KFAR JARRA, Lebanon (R) — Fighting erupted in Lebanon Monday between government troops and Palestinian guerrillas who refused to surrender their strongholds to the army. Mortars and machineguns opened up near the villages of Salhiyeh and Kfar Jarra, six kilometres east of Sidon, a Reuters correspondent said from the scene.

"Mortars are flying overhead and we can hear firing from both sides," the correspondent reported by telephone from an army barracks.

Fighting began after hours of heated negotiations between the army, trying to extend the government's authority over the lawless south, and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials who have 6,000 guerrillas in the area.

Lebanese troops earlier took over the port of Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut, ending militia rule there for the first time since civil war erupted 16 years ago.

But the army ran into repeated snags as its convoys inched into the main PLO bastion in Lebanon.

There were no immediate reports of casualties in the fighting which began shortly before dark and raged for about 20 minutes before lapsing into sporadic shooting.

Two ambulances sped towards Sidon apparently carrying casualties.

Earlier, a soldier was wounded in the leg and two Lebanese guerrillas were injured as the army rounded up about 60 gunmen east of Sidon.

Military sources said army commander General Emile Lahoud ordered that the deployment into PLO strongholds should go ahead at any cost after guerrillas blocked his advancing troops.

Led by tanks, about 6,000 troops sped into Sidon and took over the port on Monday morning. By evening, military sources said 4,000 reinforcements had been moved in to help deal with the PLO. Witnesses said the guerrillas had also beefed up their forces.

Troops failed to negotiate their way through 'Ain Jarra, where

the PLO holds a base overlooking two Palestinian refugee camps. "We'll need artillery cover," a soldier in full combat gear told a comrade at the barracks as they waited for orders shortly before the firing began. Troop reinforcements poured into the area.

Military sources said the Palestinians fired mortar bombs at the troops. The army fired back and seized eight four-wheel drive vehicles, three of them loaded with guns.

Defence Minister Michel Al Murr threatened to use force after the army thrust was halted by Palestinian fighters who took to village streets and refused to hand over their bases.

"We wish the operation to be completed peacefully but if the army has to use force to implement the decision it will," he said. He added that the deployment had to be completed by dark.

In the village of Salhiyeh, an agreement was reached for the army column to move up the main road and set up checkpoints. But in Kfar Jarra, the army demanded that it take over a PLO base.

Algeria tightens crackdown against fundamentalist unrest 700 detained; FIS office occupied

ALGERIA (Agencies) — The army intensified its crackdown on Islamic fundamentalists Monday, announcing 700 arrests and occupying the headquarters of the main opposition party, its two top leaders face trial for "armed conspiracy."

The crackdown, including the arrests of the senior leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), followed renewed clashes between fundamentalists and security forces. The army said four people, including a policeman, had been killed and 15 people injured.

Fundamentalist sources said as many as 2,500 people had been arrested.

FIS President Abassi Madani and Vice-President Ali Belhadj were among those arrested Sunday. They had issued a call Friday for a holy war if the government did not lift a state of emergency, and they defied summonses served on them after their speeches.

They were to be charged with armed conspiracy against the security of the state, the military said. No details were released on possible charges against the others arrested.

Helmeted riot police units encircled the front headquarters at midday Monday, evacuated all its

personnel and took over the building. Pedestrians were barred from passing by on the adjacent sidewalk.

Hours earlier Mr. Madani was led away from the headquarters by a solitary security agent. His deputy Belhadj was arrested in a separate operation.

A security source told Reuters that six members of the FIS ruling body, the Majlis Shoura, were arrested at 2.30 a.m. on Monday. They were picked up in a house in Boulevard Didouche Monrad, Algiers' main thoroughfare.

Mr. Madani and Mr. Belhadj were now in an army barracks in Cheraga suburb of the capital, he added.

A special force, trained in Italy and under the direction of the anti-espionage department, arrested Mr. Madani, he said.

Algerian Television, quoting a military communiqué, said Mr. Madani and Mr. Belhadj had been arrested for involvement in a conspiracy against state security. It said they would be tried.

"It looks as if the army took up the gauntlet," said one Western diplomat Monday. "It was not really a surprise, they have been increasingly targeting the FIS in the past few days."

One commentator said there

were fears of a fundamentalist backlash by Mr. Madani's supporters who want to transform Algeria into an Islamic state.

There was no immediate reaction from FIS to the arrest of its leaders, but their colleagues were expected to meet soon to consider a response. Radicals within the front favour escalating the confrontation with the government, while moderates have spoken of a "reconciliation" strategy aimed at avoiding a ban.

The government said that Iran's ambassador, Javad Qorban Ughli, had been summoned to the Foreign Ministry to be warned that his country should stay out of Algeria's internal affairs. On Saturday, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said in Tehran that he hoped Algerians would follow the example of Iranian revolutionaries by establishing an Islamic republic.

The FIS has led four weeks of protests that coincided with the start of campaigning for Algeria's first multiparty parliamentary elections, which were to have been held June 27.

The front claimed election laws favoured President Chadli Benjedid's National Liberation Front (FLN), until 1989 the country's only legal political party.

Kuwait assembles task force to sweep emirate for weapons

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti authorities assembled a task force to make sweeping searches for illegal arms left by retreating Iraqi forces and warned anyone caught with them after midnight on Tuesday faced 15 years in prison.

"When the deadline is over we will start a complete search campaign and a far-reaching combing operation," Interior Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al Hamoud Al Sabah said in an interview published by all newspapers on Monday.

But 36 hours before deadline there were no signs of a rush to hand in guns, rockets or explosives at police stations in Kuwait City.

The Interior Ministry, which has expressed alarm about mounting violence in the emirate, said a special force was on alert to move in as soon as the minister gave the order. It would not say if the force included the army.

The penalty for not handing over 15 years," said ministry spokesman Colonel Fahad Al Mokhlid.

Tuesday's deadline is the second set for the return of arms, which the ministry says include everything from rifles to anti-

aircraft guns and rocket-propelled grenades left over from the seven-month Iraqi occupation.

The first, two weeks ago, was extended people defied it.

Four months after the end of the Gulf war, Kuwaitis say they still feel the need to protect themselves — against fellow Kuwaitis, Palestinians and other foreign residents they accuse of collaborating with the Iraqis.

The 200,000-strong Palestinian community in turn feels threatened by the state and fears arrest, imprisonment or deportation. Thousands are planning to leave Kuwait for good.

In an interview with the Abu Dhabi-based daily Al Itihad, the interior minister said guns handed in so far were overwhelmingly from Kuwaiti citizens.

"Other nationalities are still keeping their weapons," he said, stoking speculation that any search would concentrate on non-Kuwaiti areas of the city.

The minister's words were echoed at police stations around Kuwait City but few people appeared to turn in weapons.

In Farwaniyah, a largely

Palestinian neighbourhood, Monday morning's haul appeared to consist of a dozen hunting rifles and just one bazooka. Three old men being questioned at the reception point had one rusty shotgun between them.

Visits to Kuwaiti households at night show that possession of one sporting gun is regarded as a birthright — ownership of a Gulf war weapon is a symbol of manhood and security.

Western diplomats say anyone can get a gun simply by going to one of the thousands of Iraqi bunkers dotted across the emirate. The state is stuffed with assault rifles, ammunition, grenades and heavier arms awaiting disposal.

The diplomats said they doubted that any search operation would have much effect because the police and army lack numbers, organisation and professionalism.

Many Kuwaiti residents fear that so many privately-held arms caches could easily lead to widespread violence. Although vigilante gang killings which followed the end of the Gulf war have virtually ceased, shootings are still a nightly occurrence.



PREMIER MEETS JUDICIARY: Prime Minister attended by Justice Minister Tayseer Kanaan (left) Taher Masri (second from left) Monday receives (see story on page 3) the senior-most judges of the Kingdom in a meeting

Iraq says nothing to hide; U.N. inspectors dissatisfied

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — The Iraqi minister in charge of military industries said Monday his country had nothing to hide but U.N. troubleshooters said they had made no progress in gaining access to equipment which could make nuclear weapons.

General Amer Hammoudi Al Saadi, the minister of industry and military industrialisation, told Reuters in an interview: "We just want to come clean. We want everyone to know that we have nothing to hide."

He recalled that President Saddam Hussein had given strict orders that U.N. inspectors be free to see whatever they wanted. "I know the order," he said. "It was 'show them everything they want, real or imagined'."

But one of three senior U.N. officials sent to Baghdad with an ultimatum from the Security Council said U.N. inspectors were no closer to investigating a convoy they claim is carrying equipment for making weapons-grade enriched uranium.

"We have not solved any question yet of any significance. That's all I can say," said Rolf Ekens, head of the U.N. Special Commission set up under the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire to scotch Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Ekens, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Hans Blix and U.N. Under-

Secretary General Akashi arrived on Sunday. They met Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein late on Sunday and Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz Monday.

The Security Council sent them to Baghdad after Iraqi soldiers allegedly prevented the U.N. inspectors on the ground in Iraq from visiting a military site and checking the convoy.

David Kay, an American who is deputy leader of the inspection team, said photographic evidence that the convoy had crates contained equipment for making bomb-grade enriched uranium was unrefutable.

Mr. Kay added that he was taken back to the army base by Iraqi officials Monday but found nothing.

Mr. Blix said the team's two-hour meeting with Mr. Aziz did not go well, raising doubts that a scheduled meeting later Monday with Prime Minister Saddam Hamadi would be held.

The Hammadi meeting "is a question mark," Mr. Blix said in an afternoon interview. "There's not much progress to report."

Mr. Blix and other U.N. officials were reluctant to talk while meetings were continuing, but they implied that Iraqi officials were stonewalling their attempts to get a clear answer on whether they could see the crated material.

Mr. Blix "was not getting a

direct answer" from Mr. Aziz, Iraq's former foreign minister, during their meeting, said a U.N. source who spoke on condition of anonymity. Mr. Blix said Mr. Aziz dwelled on "points of clarification." He would not elaborate.

The Security Council has warned Iraq that "any recurrence of non-compliance (with U.N. resolutions) would have serious consequences." The United States has hinted it might attack suspected nuclear installations with warplanes.

Iraqi Foreign Ministry officials said the team had told them they wanted to leave on Tuesday or early on Tuesday.

Under an April 3 Security Council resolution on a Gulf war ceasefire, Iraq must provide details of its chemical, biological, ballistic and nuclear weapons so that material can be removed or destroyed.

A U.N. trade blockade, imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2, will stay in place until Iraq complies.

Industry Minister Saadi said Iraq's nuclear research programme was purely civilian. "Many countries have such a programme," he added.

He said that before the Gulf war the government aimed to have two nuclear power stations by the year 2,000.

CORRECTION

DUE to transcribing errors, and editorial oversight, the text of His Majesty King Hussein's interview with the Japanese newspaper Yomiuri Shimbun, which appeared in the Jordan Times yesterday, contained a number of mistakes that are corrected below for the record.

In describing the plight of returnees from Kuwait, the King said: "Nonetheless, we have received back something like 250,000 people, some of whom have been working for the Gulf governments three generations or so. Many of them did not leave through Jordan." In the text the last sentence read was misquoted as "a very huge leap through Jordan."

In defining the U.N. role in the proposed peace conference, the King said: "We would like the moral weight of the world with us. We would like, certainly, if it is not under U.N. auspices, in terms of the U.N. being involved, (to have the process) in any event end up with the guarantees of the Security Council which are implicit in 242 and 338." The words "in any event" were misprinted in the text to read "many events."

In answering a question on Israeli attitudes on the peace process, the King was quoted as saying he had been "in Petra, and made some statements." In fact, he had said: "I have been in 'touch', and made some statements." In the same answer, the King said: "We need the goodwill of all 'friends' and not as mentioned in the interview 'the goodwill of all 'Arabs'."

In referring to President Bush's proposal for banning mass

Slovenian refusal to relinquish 'borders' stalls peace proposal

LJUBLJANA, Yugoslavia (Agencies) — The breakaway republic of Slovenia said Monday it would not relinquish control of its borders to the federal government, potentially jeopardising an agreement aimed at stopping hostilities.

Federal troops began clashing with Slovene defence forces last week after the republic seized its borders and asserted its independence.

Slovene Radio reported air raid sirens in some cities and said that federal air forces helicopters and jets were flying low over some cities in the republic.

The radio said Slovene defence forces fired shots at army helicopters taking off and that air raid sirens were heard in the city of Krsko, site of Slovenia's nuclear power plant.

The reports, could not be confirmed.

The leader of Slovenia said that a peace agreement brokered by the European Community (EC) would fall apart unless the world community oversaw the withdrawal of federal troops.

The accord was announced early Monday by three EC peace envoys after last-ditch talks to stop the Balkan state sliding into civil war.

But Slovenian President Milan Kucan told a news conference: "I doubt the success of any agreement unless there is international control, including military observers."

"No one has control of the army. If there is no control of the

army, the agreements have no meaning," he declared.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman suggested that U.N. peacekeeping forces should be set in to help to separate warring ethnic factions.

Croatia, which declared independence last week with the northern Alpine republic of Slovenia, fears a new explosion of violence.

In an ominous sign, Croatian officials said the police chief in the town of Osijek was shot dead on Monday morning and shooting broke out in nearby Borovo Selo.

The peace accord was finalised amid a flurry of efforts to avert civil war after the Yugoslavia and Croatia army should suspend further steps to implement their independence for three months.

The moratorium was intended to give politicians a breathing space to work out new constitutional arrangements between Yugoslavia's six republics and two provinces.

Slovenia and Croatia, the wealthiest and most westernised republics, want to break ties gradually with the rest of the country, spelling an end of the federation after 72 troubled years.

A crucial part of the agreement, pressed for by the EC, was settled when Yugoslavia's eight-man collective presidency elected Croatia's Stipe Mesic as head of state.

An earlier veto by Serbia, the biggest republic, on Mr. Mesic's appointment had aggravated the

Israelis ponder U.S. aid, row over settlement

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel is counting on U.S. aid to house and employ the hundreds of thousands of immigrants pouring in from the Soviet Union. But what if Uncle Sam won't pay? That's something the average Israeli preferred not to think about until last week. But then came a surprise disclosure from Finance Minister Yitzhak Mordechai that he has "contingency plans" in case the aid is refused.

Some Israelis fear that Washington will use the aid as a lever for extracting Israeli "concessions" towards the Middle East peace process, such as a freeze on building Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. They say Israel should prepare to go it alone.

Israel wants \$10 billion over the next five years to underwrite loans to pay for accommodating the immigrants. Mr. Mordechai says that if he doesn't get the money, he will dig into "the pockets of working people," which Israelis take to mean higher taxes and costlier luxury goods.

The result has been a spirited debate among three broad camps: Free-marketisers who would welcome an aid cutoff to force Israel into putting its financial house in order; nationalists, who say the Jewish state cannot shake its policies to foreign dictates; and bottom-line economists who say that without the aid, the Soviet influx will bankrupt Israel.

"The question is whether we should accept the United States standing up and saying, folks, your state of Israel is dependent on us," said former Finance Minister Yigal Hurwitz, voicing the "nationalist" argument in one of several radio debates.

"If we stand up and say we don't agree, they will think twice before giving us orders again," he said.

In another radio debate, economist Sever Plotzky said an aid cutoff would trim living standards by up to one-quarter.

He foresaw "very high taxes on imports" and a ban on exploiting foreign currency.

"We may be unable to buy a car, a video..." he said.

Even then, he said, Israel would only raise enough money

(Continued on page 2)

Arab ministers to meet in Kuwait July 9

CAIRO (R) — Foreign Ministers from Egypt, Syria and the Gulf states will meet in Kuwait on July 9 in a renewed attempt to settle differences over the composition of the Gulf defence force they agreed to set up in Damascus in March.

Arab diplomats and military experts say the future of the force must now be in doubt and they do not expect the Kuwait meeting will put the controversy to rest.

"The situation is becoming more confused, messier with time, not better," said a military expert who asked not to be named.

"I don't believe the ministers will reach an agreement on how large the Arab force will be ... if

at this point there is going to be an Arab force with Egypt and Syria."

"The most they will do is agree to meet again," said an Arab diplomat.

Diplomats in Kuwait said last month that the eight countries had finally agreed the force would have 26,000 men, including a brigade of 3,000 men from each of Syria and Egypt.

In Cairo, Arab and Egyptian experts say otherwise. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak agreed in principle during a visit to Kuwait last month to send 12,000 to 15,000 men and Syria was to contribute a 10,000-strong force, they say.

"The Kuwaitis went back on

this agreement after he (Mr. Mubarak) left," said one expert. "They said let us discuss figures later and study further for the July 9 meeting."

Kuwait's defence minister said in an interview last week his country wanted a symbolic Arab force of about 5,000 men to guarantee security in the Gulf.

"Kuwait's area is too small to accommodate huge numbers of Egyptian and Syrian troops or Gulf troops generally," Sheikh Ali Sabah Salim Al Sabah said. "The aim from the start was clearly to station symbolic Arab forces."

Cairo and Damascus want a bigger role in any Gulf force, in

line with the march agreement signed by Egypt, Syria and the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states — Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Egypt and Syria took part in the U.S.-led campaign which pushed Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in February.

The experts said Cairo argued that 3,000 or 50,000 Egyptian soldiers alongside a GCC force would not be enough to repel an Iraqi invasion similar to that of last August.

Arab diplomats say Oman, however, wants Egyptian and Syrian troops to be flown into the area only when needed.

Ethiopian government talks delayed

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Round-table talks on forming a new transitional government in Ethiopia were delayed on Monday as leaders from dozens of political factions held last-minute negotiations.

Security was tight in the capital and scores of heavily-armed fighters of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which overthrew the government of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam in May, guarded the city centre.

Diplomats said that the talks were expected to start later on Monday but that would leave little time for hard business on the first day.

Political sources with close contacts with the EPRDF said the northern-based guerrilla group was set to dominate an 81-seat state council, due to be appointed at the conference.

The source said the EPRDF would take 34 seats in the coun-

cil, with 12 allocated to the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), a rebel group seeking self-determination for the Oromo people, Ethiopia's largest ethnic group.

They said three further seats had been set aside for the Afar Liberation Front (ALF), representing an ethnic group living in a strategic belt along the Red Sea coast.

Other political and armed factions were likely to be restricted to two seats each, the sources added.

The EPRDF says it wants a broad-based leadership, ethnically and politically.

EPRDF leader Meles Zenawi has said the talks would open the way for political parties to campaign under the proposed transitional government in the lead up to national elections. Diplomats said the elections could take place within 12 months.

These separatist Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), in control of the Red Sea province of Eritrea since last month, has refused to take part in the transitional government.

But EPLF Secretary-General Isayas Afewerke is attending the Addis Ababa conference.

Diplomats said the Eritrean issue was a key subject at the last-minute discussions, together with the status of the port of Asab, the country's main trade link with the outside.

"They have to at least address the status of Eritrea at the conference," one western ambassador said.

Mr. Zenawi said Saturday the EPRDF would raise a four-point agenda for the conference, including the future of Eritrea.

Confusion reigned in the capital as security forces kept central areas cordoned off and international observers and foreign jour-

nalists scrambled for transport and security passes.

Hundreds of delegates and observers descended on Addis Ababa for the conference, expected to last three days.

The permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — the United States, the Soviet Union, China, France and Britain — are all represented.

So are the European Community, the Organisation of African Unity and the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa.

The chief U.S. observer, Herman Cohen, assistant secretary of state for African affairs, was seen racing around the capital in a white Cadillac, escorted by a convoy of EPRDF fighters.

The EPRDF has accused former members of Col. Mengistu's ruling party and ex-soldiers of sabotage in the city in recent weeks, and is making a strong show of force.

Kurds say they want democracy for all Iraq

DAMASCUS (R) — Iraqi Kurdish rebel leaders who have reacted coolly to autonomy proposals will press the government for democracy in all of Iraq, a Kurdish official said.

There are problems between us and the Iraqi regime on democracy and the constitution and we did not reach any agreement so far," said Jabbar Farman, a leading member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

"Democracy is a demand for all Iraqis and not just the Kurds. We feel that any gains we get on autonomy would mean nothing if there was no real democracy in Iraq."

The original proposals were made to Masoud Barzani, head of the Kurdish Democratic Party, after lengthy talks in Baghdad earlier this month.

Mr. Farman, representing Kurds at a meeting of Iraqi opposition parties in Damascus, said his people had set up a committee to present a new formula to the Iraqi government.

Some 17 groups making up the Iraqi National Joint Action Committee are meeting in Damascus to discuss the Kurdish autonomy talks and other issues. Eleven other groups are also represented.

Non-Kurdish members of the alliance strongly criticised the dialogue with Baghdad.

Mr. Farman said he briefed the meeting on the outcome of the talks and the circumstances which led to the negotiations.

He said the Kurds were forced to negotiate after their rebellion failed and some two million refugees, mainly Kurds, fled to the Turkish and Iranian borders.

Troops also crushed a simultaneous rebellion in the mainly Shi'ite Muslim south.

U.S. and allied troops moved into northern Iraq to set up guarded havens and encourage Kurds to come home. The allies now plan a turkey-based force to protect the Kurds, a development which has emboldened the Kurds to seek more concessions.

"Our brothers understood our position and their stand was positive to some extent, although they objected any dialogue with (the government)," Mr. Farman said.

The opposition meeting, which opened on Saturday, has been extended till Monday evening to finalise resolutions.

Mr. Farman said the Kurds were still taking part actively in the opposition alliance, formed in December.

"Demands for democracy which we are making during the dialogue with the Iraqi government go in line with those of the joint action committee," he said.

British MPs want West's troops to stay in Iraq

LONDON (R) — A U.N. force being deployed in Iraq is unlikely to provide adequate security for Kurdish and Shi'ite refugees and Western troops should remain until their safety can be guaranteed, a British parliamentary report said on Monday.

A proposal for an allied rapid reaction force based across the border in Turkey would also not necessarily guarantee safety for returning refugees, the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee asserted.

"The presence of allied forces in the region did not deter the original action," it said, referring to the end of Kurdish and Shi'ite rebellions in the wake of the Gulf war.

"Unless and until there is a U.N. force which can provide effective reassurance to the persecuted inhabitants of northern and southern Iraq, it would be wrong for coalition forces to leave them."

The Foreign Affairs Committee report was compiled after trips in late May to Iran and Turkey where up to two million Iraqi refugees fled when Baghdad's army ended the rebellions.

It said the 500-man U.N. force currently being deployed in Iraq "is unlikely to provide the reassurance that the refugees need" and added that a statement early last month by general Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, that U.S. forces would withdraw soon had added to their uncertainty.

The report made no specific recommendations but called on the U.N. Security Council to take urgent steps to guarantee the safety of the civilian population of Iraq.

It also called on the British government to organise a conference in the near future to bring together governments, U.N. and other international aid agencies and non-government groups to draw up a blueprint for a more coordinated response to future disasters, whether man-made or natural.

Gen. Lahd also reportedly said he had received no "official" appeals to release any prisoners.

The South Lebanon Army, which is trained and financed by Israel, is believed to hold 300-400 Lebanese and Palestinians at Al Khiam. Shi'ite Muslim leaders have insisted these detainees must be freed as part of any deal for missing Westerners.

The Lebanese also demand freedom for Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid, a Muslim cleric kidnapped by Israeli agents in July 1989 as bait for a prisoner swap.

Of the Israelis missing in Lebanon, three are believed held by the Shi'ite Muslim Hizbollah movement, of which Sheikh Obeid reportedly is a leader. Another, a Druze soldier, was said by guerrillas to have died in captivity, and three others are missing since a June 1982 tank battle near Syrian lines in Eastern Lebanon.

SLA leader said ready to release prisoners

TEL AVIV (AP) — The leader of an Israeli-backed Lebanese militia said Monday he was ready to swap hundreds of Palestinian and Lebanese detainees for Israeli troops missing in Lebanon, Israel Radio reported.

Release of detainees held by General Antoine Lahd's South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia is believed to be a key to gaining freedom for 13 Western hostages in Lebanon.

Gen. Lahd's remarks were quoted amid a flurry of reports on diplomatic efforts to free the Westerners and seven Israeli soldiers.

The militia commander reportedly told a radio reporter he was "ready to trade the hundreds of Palestinian and Shi'ite prisoners" that his men are holding at Al Khiam prison in South Lebanon.

He added this would be "on condition that the deal would include Israeli army missing and men being held by terrorists," the report added.

Gen. Lahd also reportedly said he had received no "official" appeals to release any prisoners.

The South Lebanon Army, which is trained and financed by Israel, is believed to hold 300-400 Lebanese and Palestinians at Al Khiam. Shi'ite Muslim leaders have insisted these detainees must be freed as part of any deal for missing Westerners.

The Lebanese also demand freedom for Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid, a Muslim cleric kidnapped by Israeli agents in July 1989 as bait for a prisoner swap.

Of the Israelis missing in Lebanon, three are believed held by the Shi'ite Muslim Hizbollah movement, of which Sheikh Obeid reportedly is a leader. Another, a Druze soldier, was said by guerrillas to have died in captivity, and three others are missing since a June 1982 tank battle near Syrian lines in Eastern Lebanon.

Turkey's new premier says disunity could doom party

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's new Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, facing elections within 18 months, told his party on Sunday disunity could spell doom at the polls.

"If we show unity and cooperation, Motherland will again be the ruling party after the elections. If we cannot show unity, Motherland might not even enter parliament," Mr. Yilmaz said.

Under the constitution, a party must win 10 per cent of the popular vote to enter parliament. Motherland won 275 seats in the 450-seat national assembly in 1989 under the leadership of its founder, Turgut Ozal, who was elected president in 1989.

The Anatolian news agency said Mr. Yilmaz told Motherland deputies he would announce the date of a general election within two months. The poll must be held by the end of 1992 but could be called this year.

Mr. Yilmaz took office a week ago after his predecessor Yildirim Akbulut at a stormy Motherland Party congress.

Mr. Akbulut, a conservative, has since accused Mr. Ozal and his family of favouring Mr. Yilmaz, a liberal former foreign minister.

About 90 pro-Akbulut Motherland deputies have said they will meet to decide whether to support the government when it seeks parliament's confidence in a vote scheduled for July 5.

Unveiling his government's programme to parliament, Mr. Yilmaz promised a better deal for restive wage-earners and ex-

ports. Pay rises for public employees would outrun inflation and need tax reforms would be spending on education, health, culture and interest on housing loans tax-deductible, he said.

It was not clear if the program would defuse unrest among 1.5 million public sector workers, mandating raises of up to 200 per cent, well above inflation at 62.5 per cent a year.

Mr. Yilmaz said tax collection methods would be improved, gave no other details about the government planned to target growing public spending deficit which has fuelled inflation.

He said the government would encourage exports and indicated it would drop the anti-inflation strong lira policy maintained the central bank for the last years.

"With the aim of increasing exports, there will be no revaluation of the Turkish lira," Yilmaz declared.

Ethem Pakdemirli, a former finance minister who is economic chief in the new cabinet, is known to favour export-led growth.

Exporters have complained that the real appreciation of lira was hurting their competitive edge. In 1990 it lost average of 30 per cent, or two-thirds of its inflation rate.

Mr. Yilmaz said Turkey would maintain an active foreign policy which would aim to strengthen ties with Western Europe as well as its Balkan, Black Sea and Middle Eastern neighbours.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Snakes hurled at Israeli military offices

TEL AVIV (R) — Demonstrators on Sunday hurled bottles with live snakes inside at Israeli military administration headquarters in an occupied West Bank village, Israel Television reported. The snakes dispersed inside the building, forcing officials to stop work and evacuate their offices, the television said. No injuries were reported in the incident, which took place in the village of Yabud in the northern part of West Bank.

Soviet emigres injured in hotel arson

TEL AVIV (AP) — A fire blamed on arson engulfed a first-floor corridor of a Tel Aviv hotel housing newly arrived Soviet immigrants, injuring four people, police said Monday. The blaze, which erupted late Sunday at the Ami hotel came as more than 6,500 Soviets arrived in Israel this weekend in advance of a new Soviet emigration law. Police suspect the fire was set by a resident of the hotel, possibly someone mentally disturbed, said city police spokeswoman Dalila Gilad. She said no suspects were detained. She added that Palestinians who have protested against the immigration wave were not suspected. "There is no nationalist direction to the investigation," she said. Three immigrants were treated at nearby Ichilov hospital for smoke inhalation and a fourth woman suffered a broken leg after jumping out of a window, Israel Radio said. The fourth woman was believed to be an Israeli. The fire was extinguished within an hour. About 280,000 Soviets have immigrated to Israel since mid-1989. In the past week the pace of immigration has increased because of a new Soviet law taking effect Monday that requires emigres to carry Soviet passports. Israeli officials are worried the law could bring a lull in immigration since it could take each potential immigrant three months to obtain a passport. Previously, immigrants needed only a Soviet exit visa.

Minehunters head for Mediterranean

SUEZ, Egypt (AP) — Seven Belgian, Dutch and French minehunters entered the Suez Canal towards the Mediterranean Sea on Monday after ending tours of duty in the Gulf, a canal official said. The official, who declined to be identified under canal rules, identified the boats as Zinnia, Myosotis and Iris, all from Belgium; Harlingen and Haarlem, from the Netherlands; and France's Orion and Aigle. During the Gulf war, which ended Feb. 28, allied forces led by the United States sent dozens of naval units to the Gulf. Most have returned home, but mine sweepers and minehunters stayed to seek out and destroy explosives endangering navigation. The Suez Canal links the Mediterranean and Red seas. Suez is at its southern tip.

Solarz in Bahrain on fact-finding mission

BAHRAIN (R) — A U.S. congressman is in Bahrain on a fact-finding mission over the post-war political and military situation in the Gulf, an American embassy spokesman said Monday. Congress Stephen Solarz held talks on Monday morning with the emir, Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa which were attended by Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa Ben Salman Al Khalifa and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad Ben Mubarak Al Khalifa. Mr. Solarz, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, was on his first trip to the area since the Gulf war ended in late February. The spokesman said Mr. Solarz would report back to the committee on his return from the Gulf. He gave no further details.

Correction

(Continued from page 1)

destruction weapons in the region, the King said he hoped "that there will be no need in the future for such weapons to be here..." The word "such" was missing in the Yoniuri transcript.

— In recalling the history of the Gulf crisis, the King said: "I was not involved. I did not know. I knew there was a problem when I heard about it at the Arab summit in Baghdad in front of all Arab leaders. But beyond that people kept it away from us. I went just a couple of days before the failure of the conference in Jeddah to Baghdad and then to Kuwait and I sensed that the atmosphere was not a comfortable one there. And I came back and I warned something has to be done to ensure that the meeting

in Jeddah succeed. I did not expect this war, and I was against it entirely."

The Yoniuri transcript of the interview, a copy of which the newspaper made available to the Jordan Times on Sunday, took this paragraph out of context, and it contained a number of transcription errors.

— In commenting on his appointment of Mr. Taber Masri as prime minister, the King had this to say: "... I believe that he is relatively a young prime minister who has had a lot of experience." In the Jordan Times text the word "had" erroneously appeared as "head".

The Jordan Times regrets the errors and apologises for any inconvenience they may have caused His Majesty and its readers.

Israelis ponder U.S. aid

(Continued from page 1)

to absorb half the immigrants now expected. And meanwhile, austerity would cause recession and unemployment, which would deter immigration.

"The moment the line at the employment office in Tel Aviv is much longer than the line for sausages in Moscow — that's the moment when Jews will stop coming," he said.

In their early years of statehood, Israelis endured austerity to accommodate waves of immigration. But 40 years later, they have grown used to creature comforts.

Professor Ezra Zohar, a staunch free-market advocate, says Israel could pay its own way if the government cut its spending.

"It wastes huge sums because it is 'scorned' from the U.S. government and world Jewry," he said, using a Yiddish word for

Cadging, or mooching. The only way to change that is "to stop the U.S. support," he says.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, arguing the loan guarantees and issues such as settlements are entirely unconnected, says the United States, having helped open the gates of the Soviet Union to Jews, has a moral duty to help settle them.

But Israelis are aware that the United States already faces huge aid demands both at home and from former communist countries, and they worry that if Mr. Shamir doesn't bend, Washington will hit back.

The Rafiah, a former diplomat at the Israeli embassy in Washington, says he senses that Mr. Shamir is aware of the danger and will ultimately do what is needed by September, when Israel must present its aid request to Washington.

Moelleman leaves Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — German Economy Minister Juergen Moelleman left Tehran Monday after promising to review a German decision to halt work on a nuclear power plant under construction in southern Iran, Tehran Radio reported.

Mr. Moelleman arrived in the Iranian capital Saturday with 110 prominent business executives hoping to pick up lucrative contracts for Iranian reconstruction projects.

But Tehran has apparently linked the contracts to the fate of the nuclear plant near the port of Bushehr.

Iran's economy minister, Mohtashem Nourbakhsh, told Mr. Moelleman Saturday that trade relations with Germany could expand "with the removal of some obstacles," the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported in a dispatch monitored in Nicosia.

Germany's Kraftwerke Union, a subsidiary of Siemens, was commissioned to build the Bushehr plant in 1975. But work stopped in 1979 after the Islamic revolution because the new government defaulted on payments.

The 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war prevented any further work. The plant, scheduled to have two 1,300-megawatt reactors, was bombed at least six times by the Iraqi air force and a German technician was killed in one raid.

The Paris-based International Chamber of Commerce ruled recently that Iran should pay its outstanding debt to the German firm and asked Kraftwerke to complete the project.

A Kraftwerke spokesman later said the company asked the German government for permission to finish the plant. The government rejected that, apparently because it was not satisfied with safety arrangements in Bushehr.

Qadhafi smashes Khartoum prison gate in symbolic act

KHARTOUM (AP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi joined Sudan's military leader atop a bulldozer Monday to smash the gate of the country's largest prison as a symbolic gesture to human rights.

The Libyan leader, wearing a white robe, drove the tractor as Sudanese leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir sat beside him in military fatigues.

Scores of security men rode the machine or surrounded it. After the gate of the British-built 86-year-old Kober prison came crashing down, Col. Qadhafi stood, smiled and waved to thousands gathered for the occasion.

"The move is symbolic," Col. Qadhafi had told them earlier. "It rings the bell for the dawn of a

new era, an era of democracy and siding with freedom." Lieutenant General Bashir, celebrating the second anniversary of his military coup on Sunday, said the Kober prison had become a symbol of injustice and he would release all 1,300 inmates, including political detainees.

The prison in Khartoum north, across the Blue Nile from the Sudanese capital, housed former Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi, whose government Gen. Bashir overthrew in 1989. Gen. Bashir released Mr. Mahdi earlier this year.

Gen. Bashir's deputy, Major General Al Zubeir Mohamud Salah, told the ceremony on Monday Kober symbolised British oppression and destroying it showed Sudan was truly independent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

man 30, Aqaba 37. Humidity readings: Amman 47 per cent, Aqaba 28 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Hisham Kanan 790286
Dr. Anwar Muna Al Haj 771020
Dr. Adel Amman 812148
Dr. Saleh Zayed 790577
First pharmacy 661912
Pardons pharmacy 778336
Al Asmaa pharmacy 637055
Nabatah pharmacy 636762
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yaacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsa pharmacy 637660

DRUID:
Dr. Ali Shuqairi (—)
Dr. Ali Shuqairi (73825)

ZARQA:
Dr. Issa Al Omari (—)
Khalifa pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 641111
Civil Defence Emergency 630241
Rescue 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 640422
Traffic Police 696390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 625800
Price Complaints 636176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 771111
Ammunition Municipality 771111
Radio Jordan 774111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 632101
Repairs 661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 731111
Jordan Television 731111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815613

Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53330
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53330

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Humam Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Aliyah Maternity, J. Amn. 644412/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mallat, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 664171/4
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845455
Al-Musader Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Al-Bashir, J. Amman 775111/2
Army, Marja 896111/5
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09198333
Zarqa National Hospital 091991071

Ibn Sina Hospital 091986732
IRBID:
Prince Basma Hospital 02127555
Greek Catholic Hospital 02127222
Ibn Al Nafesa Hospital 021247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital 031314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53330-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:30 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:45 Doha (RJ)
08:30 Aqaba (RJ)
08:45 Moscow, Dubai (RJ)
16:30 London (RJ)

17:00 New York, Montreal (RJ)
18:00 Cairo (RJ)
18:35 Frankfurt (RJ)
19:15 Belgrade (RJ)
20:20 Tripoli (RJ)

Premier pledges to facilitate Judiciary work

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Tawfiq Al Masri said Monday that the government was determined to facilitate the work of the judicial authorities so that each citizen can be assured of his rights.

"The government plans to offer the courts further administrative facilities so that the Jordanian judiciary can carry out its work with all integrity," said the prime minister during a visit to the Court of Appeal and the Higher Court of Justice.

Mr. Masri met with the heads of the two courts and their assistant judges and discussed ways of promoting judiciary work in general.

"Developing the work of the judiciary means the government should exert all possible efforts to provide facilities in terms of premises and in upgrading courts systems," the prime minister said.

Mr. Masri was accompanied on the visit by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport and Communications, Ali Suheimat and Mr. Taiseer Kanaan Minister of Justice.

The visit came after a statement that a special ministerial committee had been formed by the government to work towards ending martial law in Jordan, which has been in force since 1967.

Mr. Suheimat, who is chairman of the committee, said that all matters related to martial law and Economic Security Committee decisions would have to be scrutinised with the help of the judicial authorities before the committee can report its findings to the Council of Ministers.

Contrary to a report in the local press, which predicted that the report would be ready for the Cabinet meeting Tuesday, Mr. Suheimat said that the task could take longer.

Prince Hassan says trans-national understanding is important for solving region's problems

MALTA (J.T.) — An understanding of the different cultures and ideologies of the Middle East and the Mediterranean states is needed to solve the "trans-national" and "inter-cultural" problems facing the areas, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has said at the Conference on Economic Cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Prince Hassan called for a greater and deeper understanding of the cultural barriers which prevent cooperation in shared problems. "What is needed is a broadly defined security concept that addresses the interaction between people, resources-environment and cultural identity," Prince Hassan said through an official who delivered the address.

"We have to work together to evolve an intellectual hinterland or a common language for tackling constructively our common problems."

In his speech to the conference, organised by the Aspen Institute, Prince Hassan reaffirmed Jordan's proposal for a

regional conference to address the problems of the Middle East. Such an approach should be constructed in the form of a "matrix" that would allow for an analysis of specific issues within the broad working concept of regional problems, Prince Hassan said. Cooperation between participants at the conference, he said, should be the key working ingredient in addressing the specific issues. "I firmly believe that through operationalising this type of analysis we can effectively promote a process for security and cooperation in our region," Prince Hassan said.

Of special importance to Jordan is the need to address the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, he said. The consequences of the Gulf war, with the mass move of 200,000 Palestinians-Jordanians from the Gulf to Jordan, place a heavy human and economic burden on the Kingdom.

"The resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will diffuse the potentially explosive demographic situation confronting Jordan and the region," Prince Hassan said.

ing Jordan and the region," Prince Hassan said.

In addition, the Prince added, the regional conference should also consider a trilateral approach based on democracy, security and prosperity that would ensure peace and stability in the Middle East.

"Extremism and radicalism should be tackled by democratisation and freedom of expression," Prince Hassan said. "Imaginative approaches to arms control can promote security while at the same time diverting hundreds of billions of dollars towards socio-economic development."

"In conclusion it can be said that the problem facing us today is to understand each other from one another's perspective," the Prince said adding that the endeavours of a regional conference are "instrumental for evolving that lost objectivity or common language that lies at the heart of multi-cultural heritage of the Mediterranean worlds crossroads."

Jordan, Libya call for an end to inter-Arab differences

AMMAN (J.T.) Jordanian and Libyan officials Monday called for speedy measures to be taken to end differences among Arab states and for opening a new chapter in inter-Arab relations in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

The calls came from the Secretary General of Tripoli-based World Islamic Dawa Society, Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Al Sharif, who is on a visit to Jordan and Foreign Minister Abdullah Ensour and Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat.

The general situation in the Arab World was reviewed at the meeting with Mr. Ensour who underlined Libya's role in ending rifts in Arab ranks, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

"Arab states must open a new chapter in their relations designed to help the Arabs attain their common goals," the minister said.

Dr. Sharif lauded Jordan's national stand and its continued call for unity among Arab ranks. Dr. Sharif, who arrived here Sunday on a three-day visit to Jordan, discussed Arab affairs with Dr. Arabiyat who referred to the common dangers and challenges facing the Arab nation.

"Jordan seeks unity of Arab ranks and support from its sister states in its endeavours to safeguard national interests," he said.

Dr. Arabiyat referred to the inhuman practices against the Jordanians and Palestinians in Kuwait, expressing hope that efforts by Arab countries will succeed in putting an end to injustices which he said do not reflect the spirit of Islam.

Dr. Sharif echoed Jordan's for unity of Arab ranks in confronting Zionist and Western hostile moves.

Dr. Sharif is also here to take

part in the general conference of the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research (Al Bayt Foundation) which will open Tuesday under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein.

Apart from attending the conference, Dr. Sharif will also hold talks with Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Raef Nijem and Al Al Bayt President Dr. Nasreddin Al Assad to discuss means of bolstering ties between Jordanian and Libyan Islamic societies.

In an arrival statement Sunday, Dr. Sharif paid tribute to the strong ties binding Jordan and Libya. During the visit he said he would discuss with Jordanian officials the implementation of an executive programme for a Libyan Jordanian agreement designed to help propagate Islamic education and joint projects related to that programme.

Ministry, RJ agree to work jointly to encourage tourism

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Tourism and the national air carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ), have reached agreement on a plan to stimulate the tourism industry in the Kingdom. The plan will be implemented within a national framework that encompasses the cooperation of various concerned institutions.

The two sides discussed coordination matters related to efforts for boosting tourism through a joint plan and they have reached consensus on some points that will be implemented in the near future, according to RJ Chief Executive Officer Husam Abu Ghazaleh.

Speaking after a meeting with Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Abdul Kafim Al Kabarti, Mr. Abu Ghazaleh said that the two sides are in full agreement that the plan should aim at creating an appropriate tourism environment by increasing tourist attractions and encouraging people to invest more in tourist-related projects.

He said that boosting the tour-

ism industry would also be implemented through an intensification of activities designed to market Jordan in Arab and foreign countries.

The two sides, he said, have agreed that the plan should also aim at motivating international tourism organisations to offer regular tours to Jordan.

A statement following the meeting quoted Mr. Kabarti as saying that his ministry was giving due concern to the tourism industry which plays a major role in reducing the deficit in the country's balance of trade by ensuring revenues to the treasury.

By promoting tourism Jordan aims at developing economic and social life in the Kingdom and enhancing Jordan's cooperation and understanding with the nations of the world, Mr. Kabarti said.

He said that his ministry would implement directives contained in His Majesty King Hussein's letter to the new government which gives due attention to the tourism sector.

New IBM products from GBM

AMMAN (J.T.) — The release by Gulf Business Machines (GBM) of recently introduced new products by International Business Machines (IBM) is a big step in the development of GBM, a company official has said.

"One of the main reasons for founding GBM with the regional IBM distributors was so that we could coordinate local decision-making," said GBM General Manager Mustafa Rughani.

"Getting new product(s) released here at the same time as the rest of the world is a major breakthrough. IBM customers in the Gulf are now on an equal footing with those elsewhere."

GBM, which markets IBM products in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Oman, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Yemen, released the new products following their introduction by IBM in the United States and Europe.

Among the new products is a 3.5-inch Rewritable Optical Drive for PS/2 that will allow customers to write and store the equivalent of a 30-minute multimedia presentation on a single 3.5-inch optical diskette.

Other new products include four new models in the PS/2 range that use the Intel 20 MHz 386 SX microprocessor, offering more expansion options than previous desktop models.

Swindler makes JD 30,000 before being apprehended

By Ahmad Krcishan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A man varying posing as a doctor, a government official and a West Bank citizen, willing to help students, has been apprehended by police in Amman after swindling 20 people.

The man, identified by the police only as KH, a 35-year-old, has succeeded in amassing JD 30,000, from embezzlement and fraud, with the help of several accomplices, according to Prosecutor General Ahmad Jabaleh.

Posing as a West Bank citizen willing to offer students services connected with their relatives and parents in the West Bank, the impostor managed to swindle a good sum of money from his victims with the help of a number of people who supplied him with information about students, the prosecutor general said.

Mr. Jabaleh said that the impostor, who has been impersonating various people since 1987, once posed as an engineer at the Ministry of Public Works and succeeded in giving a jeweller in Amman three false cheques for a number of gold pieces he had bought from him.

One of the victims was a man whose wife had been admitted to

the Zarqa government hospital where the impostor, posing as a specialist, succeeded in obtaining JD 1,000 from the husband for arranging for the wife's treatment for cancer.

In another case, the impostor claimed that he wanted to sell his car, which actually belonged to his friend, and succeeded in getting JD 3,000 in advance for the car. While the buyer and assumed seller of the car were at the Licensing Department, with the car parked outside, the impostor sneaked out to join his friend in the car and disappeared.

According to the prosecutor general, the police were alerted and a intensive search was mounted leading to the arrest of the impostor.

Water from the Wala river to be pumped into Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) will in the coming two weeks embark on an experimental water pumping process from Wala water springs, near the town of Madaba, about 40 kilometres south of Amman, in order to help meet the growing need of water supplies in the Amman region during the summer season.

The announcement was made by engineer Mahmoud Hiyari, director of WAJ's Operations Department, who said that installations and pumping stations at Wala and the village of Lih, between Amman and Wala, would be ready for operation by the end of this week.

WAJ said in April that the Amman governorate consumes up to 210,000 cubic metres of water daily, but the amount is expected to rise to 230,000 cubic metres a day during the summer.

Mr. Hiyari noted in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the Wala spring would be supplying the Amman region with nearly 1,500 cubic metres per hour. Less water will be pumped to Madaba, which has less population, and the greater amount will reach the Amman

area, Mr. Hiyari said.

The decision was taken to ease pressure on the governorates of Mafrqa, Zarqa and Irbid whose water resources were partially pumped to the capital, Mr. Hiyari said. Other water springs that have been supplying water to Amman are located at Azraq, Duleil, Swaga and Qatraneh.

WAJ said last April that the water authority last year pumped a total of 75 million cubic metres of water to Amman residents and that 55 per cent of this amount came from the artesian wells in the Amman region.

Coinciding with the WAJ announcement, Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Kassar said Monday that his ministry was following proper procedures to follow up on preliminary study on the damages sustained by the crops in the Jordan Valley region in the past winter season. In a statement to Petra, Mr. Kassar said that the Ministry of Water and Irrigation had received a request from the prime minister's office for further clarifications about an earlier report, drawn up by an ad hoc committee, on the damages to agricultural products. He said that the committee did

not have sufficient time to complete its study of the situation and had not taken into consideration all technical matters and laboratory tests.

A group of 21 specialists from the ministries of water, health, municipal and rural affairs as well as the University of Jordan and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) had prepared the initial report which was submitted to the government.

Referring to the pollution of water in the King Talal Dam, Mr. Kassar said that a meeting would soon be held between the ministries of water and industry and trade to study the case of each separate factory within the Zarqa River Basin in order to determine the causes of the pollution and to find proper solutions for the problem.

He said that the government was keen on finding solutions to the pollution of surface and underground water resources.

The minister said his department was also eager to back industrial production in Jordan and boost the national economy provided that should not be at the expense of water pollution and the destruction of crops.

JNRCS volunteer dies

AMMAN (J.T.) — One of the first founders of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS), Najeh Al Haj Fouz Al Nabulsi (Um Walid), passed away in Amman at the age of 85.

The late Mrs. Najeh served, until her death, as head of the JNRCS's women's branch which operates Al Hiba Hospital and the typing and sewing training

centres run by the society.

She also served as an active member of the JNRCS's Executive Committee and never missed a committee meeting until her death two days ago, according to JNRCS Vice President Dr. Mohammad Hadid. In fact, he said, Mrs. Najeh attended the last Executive Committee meeting just a fortnight ago and participated in the discussions.

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CORRECTION

In Monday's Jordan Times story about a Roman Temple on Amman Citadel Hill, the information was erroneously attributed to Dr. Mahmoud Najjar. It should have read Mohammed Al Najjar. The restoration programme is financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and not UNDP as reported by the Jordan News Agency, Petra. The Jordan Times regrets the mistake.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Shouq Shoukri, Mohammad Al-Jabari and Rifa' Al-Razouk at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation 10 a.m. — 5 p.m.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Maher Al-Sinabli at Alfa Art Gallery, Insurance Building, 1st Circle.
- ★ Ceramics exhibition by Margaret Tudor and Najwa Anoub at the Spanish Cultural Centre.

LECTURE

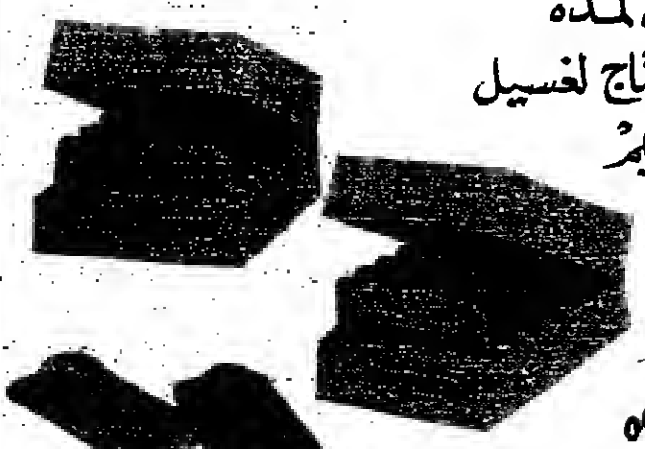
- ★ Lecture entitled "The Jordan-German Seed Project" by Dr. Nadej Hadid and Mr. R.J. Howell at the Goethe Institute — 7:00 p.m.

اوبتكوس شامي
OPTIKOS SHAMI
CONTACT LENSES CENTER
مركز العدسات اللاصقة



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Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

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HIS MAJESTY King Hussein once again reiterated his vision of what he would like Jordan to be. In an interview with the Japanese newspaper Yomiuri Shinbun this week, the King said he wanted Jordan to be "an example" of democracy, free thought and cohesion. His Majesty emphasised that the "challenge before us is greater than it has ever been" and that the people of Jordan, regardless of where they originally come from, must put their minds and hearts together. That is why, the King said, he has chosen Mr. Taher Al Masri as "a young prime minister" who has "a good team with him." The King went further by saying that Jordanians should retain the best of Arab and Muslim tradition and offer it to the world.

The King has been guiding the country through most turbulent times in the world's most explosive region. It is in no small measure due to his vision and leadership that Jordan has one of the best records in the region on human rights, on the rights of women and children and on openness to the world around us. However, Jordanians, inspired by their leadership, have always yearned for more; and they certainly deserve it. When the country opted for democracy in 1989 many conservatives and opportunists held on to an old alibi: Jordanians are not ready for democracy. But our people over the last two years have proved the reactionaries wrong. Elections were held in the best of traditions, parliament was elected and convened, and it has played well by democratic rules and norms. The press, and the Jordanian media generally, has tried very hard to be responsible, informative and progressive and has largely succeeded in its initial mission. Despite this came the draft law of press and publications, currently being read by journalists and officials after being distributed by the Ministry of Information, which does not faithfully represent the new era or spirit of democracy, openness and progressiveness. It is still premature to dwell on the different articles of the proposed law. However, an initial reading, with press laws in developed societies in mind, leaves us with an uneasy feeling about it. The law is replete with limitations and restrictions that make the process of free thought and free exchange of ideas look indeed incomplete and lacking. The right of the individuals to express themselves, a right at the heart of constitutional democracy, is greatly curtailed. While the constitution states that "every Jordanian has the right to freely express his or her opinion through speech, writing, images and all the means of expression," the draft press and publications law imposes so many restrictions, mainly through licensing of newspapers and publishing houses and at later stages, that it becomes a fundamental infringement on the right of the individual, which is the basic building bloc of every society. The right of citizens to express themselves freely is a sacred one. Suppression of speech is anathema to democracies, and we hope that this democracy which we are pursuing is not a tribal one.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

The Arabs consider French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas' visit as an important step towards the achievement of peace in the Middle East, and his talks with King Hussein an expression of France's desire to see a just and durable settlement in the region, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily. The paper said that the Arabs demand the implementation of the international legitimacy and an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, but for this to be achieved the Arabs do not require thousands of tanks and planes and rockets to be massed in the region. The paper said that the U.N. Security Council can take various measures to see the Arab rights restored and Israeli forces evacuating the occupied Arab territories. Jordan has always called for the implementation of the international legitimacy and has never despaired over the possibility of reaching a political settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the paper noted. Jordan will remain committed towards peace despite the fact that the United States is still adopting a double standard in dealing with world issues, the paper continued. But the paper asked what would Europe and the western nations at large do should Israel continue to remain intransigent and refuse to implement the international legitimacy?

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily said that the health and medical services in the Kingdom were deteriorating as the time passes, and hospitalisation services are not sufficient for all patients, a situation which calls for speedy action represented in the application of a comprehensive health insurance plan that can benefit all citizens. Mohammad Ibrahim Daoud says that the Prime Minister Mr. Taher Masri, has noted in a meeting last week that the health services have reached the red line, and this is an urgent matter which causes constant concern to the Jordanian public and the government alike. The writer notes that large numbers of people congest the health centres and the government hospitals especially Al Bashir Hospital in Amman but they do not receive proper attention. The rising prices of medicines, the growing number of patients and the latest increase in the rate of charges by private doctors and other factors are contributing to a further deterioration in the level of medical services to the public, the writer notes. The only practical and proper solution for this problem the writer says, is the application of a comprehensive health insurance scheme that can deal with the problem and save the Jordanian citizens a lot of suffering.

Rethinking the Middle East: Post-Gulf war questions

By Professor Kamal Naffa

The following is a text of an address made by the author at a conference organised by the National Association of Arab Americans on the Middle East after the Gulf war, held in Los Angeles on April 30, 1991. Dr. Kamal Naffa is professor of philosophy at Fullerton College, southern California.

SADDAM Hussein may or may not stay in power, but the forces that he unleashed, the issues he generated, the consequences of his invasion of Kuwait, the destruction of both Kuwait and Iraq, are fundamental issues that profoundly altered the political map of the Middle East and the fortunes and misfortunes of so many countries and countless millions of human beings.

We Arab-Americans and concerned Americans of good will have the duty and responsibility to analyse, formulate, and recommend steps and insight to gain a deeper and better understanding of the recent conflict and its implications.

I shall touch briefly on some of the fundamental issues generated by the recent conflict that I believe will have a strong impact on the making of the New Middle East.

This is a conflict that profoundly split not only the Arab governments, but the Arab people — even members of the same family.

This is a conflict that shattered many myths about Arab unity, the "strategic alliance" between Israel and the United States.

This is a conflict that displaced millions of people in the Arab World and deprived millions of their source of livelihood.

This is a conflict that sharpened the perception, speculation, the possibility of:

1. Democratization in the Arab World.

2. The rise of Islam as a political force.

3. The decline or collapse of Arab nationalism.

4. The fate of the Palestinian movement for self-determination.

5. The seriousness, or lack of it, for an American initiative to settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

6. Will we again see the return of the Palestinian to the Gulf?

7. Can the split in the Arab World be healed or reconciled?

8. Is democracy really possible in the Arab World? Is Islam and democracy compatible? Can democracy thrive and develop in an area of deep frustrations of severe economic and social problems?

9. What do we make of the Bush administration pronouncements about the Middle East and their actions or lack of?

10. Can justice be ever rendered to the Palestinians?

11. What is meant by the New World Order? Is it Pax Americana? Is it an era of regenerated U.N.?

12. How can we make sense of the contradictory and conflicting forces in the Arab World?

13. Did America win the war but perhaps lost the peace?

These and many other issues will be haunting us and I hope my colleagues will shed some light on these challenges.

Now that the Middle East is passing through a period of great instability, uncertainty, the insecurity, it behooves the thinkers of the region to examine the very foundation of their society, to raise critical questions, to demand answers, to discuss and formulate new ideas about the shape of things in their societies, the direction and destiny of their people.

Unfortunately, in many countries of the region there is a lack of real public forums for free critical, and vigorous debates of the basic issues and this is a very sad and limiting factor.

I. The dimension of Islam and the challenge of the modern world.

Religion is one of the most important components of life in the Middle East.

Islam has provided Arab culture with its peculiar and particular character whenever it was established and spread. Islam, faith of the vast majority of Arabs, is more than just a religion. It is the focal point of Arab society for Muslims and non-Muslims alike, permeating that culture at every level.

Political, social, economic as well as private.

The Arab system of government, Arab behaviour, Arab values, Arab ethics are firmly bound to the Islamic religion.

Fortunes of Arab success of failure, Arab strength or weakness, are bound to conditions of the Islamic religion. Whenever Islam was flourishing, Arab civilisation and might abounded with vitality, creativity, and innovation, and visa versa. Equally, when Islam and the Arabs were weak, Islam was reduced to beliefs transmitted blindly and religious laws and statutes imposed unwisely.

Historically, there has been a strong and positive correlation between Arab-Islamic strength and tolerance, openness, creativity, and on the other hand intolerance, decadence, and stagnation during periods of weakness and defeat; when Arab fortunes waned and declined.

Though secularism is an essential component of modern Arab nationalism, and though secularism and religion are inherently incompatible, yet there is a peculiar and organic relationship between Arab nationalism and Islam.

This peculiarity manifested itself during the Gulf crisis when Saddam Hussein, the leader of a secular Arab nationalist movement and ideology (Al Baath) invoked Islam as the spiritual impulse of Arab nationalism. His attempt failed and contradictions between faith and nationalism became quite apparent.

The failure of Arab nationalism as a guiding and fighting

ideology has led to the rise of Islam as a substitute force and ideology in the Arab World. "Islam is the solution" is a slogan sweeping the Middle East and the recent elections in Jordan and Algeria is an indication that Islamic political groupings are scoring major victories.

The defeat of Iraq, the defeat of the secular ideology of the Al Baath political party in its confrontation with the West, will lead to the rise and spread of Islamic fundamentalism in the whole region, and we will have Islamic republics in several countries of the Middle East.

I fear the rise of religious states whether they are Christian, Jewish, or Muslim. Religious states by their very nature are closed, dogmatic and fanatical.

A vigorous attachment to religion is an attachment to the past which leads us not to pay attention to the present. History has taught us that defeat is the fate of all who attempt to fight the present with the past.

If religion regains predominance in the new order of the Middle East, coupled with the rejection of secularism, modernisation, and pluralism, I am afraid we will be entering a new dark age.

There is no alternative for the Arab people if they wish to survive and triumph in this battle, which is the source and axis of all battles, there is no alternative but to become rationalists. Through rationalism, they will understand that their first problem is their cultural and mental backwardness and the importance of believing in truth and reason, open up to what is good no matter where it comes from, and critically examine their conditions.

Openness to what is good no matter where it comes from was a characteristic of the golden age of Arab-Muslim civilisation when the Arabs assimilated, integrated, and absorbed the best in the traditions of the countries they conquered and ruled.

The tragedy of the Gulf war should demonstrate to us the positive elements of rationalism and virtues of the liberated and organised mind.

Contemporary Arab society has reached a tragic stage of moral and spiritual bankruptcy. The collapse of the Arab League is a good example.

The future belongs to those who deserve it and the Arabs must join the modern world. By joining the modern world, I mean first the capacity to treat the individual Arab person with dignity and respect — I mean the sanctity of the individual.

The destruction of Kuwait and Iraq demonstrated the utter disregard of the worthiness of the individual human life in our contemporary culture. The Arab masses are tools to feed the egos and ambitions of their leaders.

Talk about freedom abounds in our Arab societies but the real meaning of freedom eludes most of our current concerns.

By freedom I mean 1) individuals are responsible to a great extent for their own destiny, 2)

that man is an end rather than a means, this means that man is the highest value and that all institutions including government exist to serve the individual and expand his freedoms, and 3) that good and evil are rooted in man's nature and the short comings of the social order or system. Morality is not divine revelation.

Human freedom implies that man is a rational being capable of determining events, rather than events being determined by divine intervention. God and the angels did not intervene to save Saddam Hussein from certain defeat.

By rationalism I mean that the world of nature is the only real world, man is the aim of existence, reason is the distinctive mark of man and the avenue through which he arrives at the truth and discovers reality. Reason is conducive to doubt and doubt is essential for critical thinking which we need badly in the new phase of Middle Eastern reconstruction, rehabilitation, and reconciliation.

Somebody might ask the question why am I emphasising the abstract, the theoretical, the academic. My reply is that man is what he thinks and what you think determines what you do. This applies to individuals, groups, and nations. Thought is the foundation of action. In the Middle East we need more rational, scientific thought and outlook and less mythical and poetic language where truth and objectivity are submerged in self-deception and self-delusion.

What the Middle East needs in the coming years is an intellectual revolution similar to the one that swept Europe before and after the French Revolution.

II. The dimension of militarisation

The Middle East arms race is out of control. It has its roots in the Arab-Israeli dispute as well as in the intra-Arab rivalry.

The Middle East, with less than 3 per cent of the world population, accounts for more than 8 per cent of the world's military spending. Governments here spend in excess of \$350 annually per person — three times the world average — for military purposes. The Middle East countries account for 42 per cent of the world's arms imports. These huge expenditures have turned the Middle East into the world's largest arms bazaar.

The Bush administration is vigorously pushing foreign arms sales. We have a multibillion dollar package of high tech weapons for five Gulf allies being promoted, government-backed loans for defence exports. Strong State Department support that these new arms deals are in the national interest.

While projections for national defence are to decrease, arms exports are to increase as an economic bailout for the defence

industry ignoring the risks they carry for world peace.

Talk about creating a new world order and curbing arms proliferation not-withstanding the administration is tilting towards the view that what is good for the defence industry is good for America.

In the Middle East, economic development, regional stability, and democratisation are undermined by pumping arms into these volatile regions. The only beneficiaries are the weapons makers. These defence exporters are receiving cooperative support from U.S. agencies like the embassies.

Over the next five years, annual defence spending is projected to decrease by \$56 billion in constant dollars, but defence companies are expected to double their exports in the 1990's.

Now we have an unprecedented opportunity for the U.S. to pursue a policy of arms control rather than arms exports. Even the oil-rich countries of the Gulf area (Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) can ill afford a new round of arms competition. Many of the so-called moderate friendly governments in the Middle East will use these arsenals of weapons against domestic opponents and thus any hope of genuine democratisation and free choice of governments will be crushed.

One of the vital needs of the Middle East in the era of the New World Order is not only the curbing of the proliferation of dangerous weapons but the demilitarisation of the whole region including Israel which has the only stockpile of nuclear weapons in the region.

In the long run, the arms race and the policies to spur foreign sales will come back to haunt the U.S. Unchecked by the results of foreign arms sales to Iraq, the future will bring about another Saddam Hussein to destabilise the region.

III — The dimension of justice

The Arab condition before Saddam Hussein struck and annexed Kuwait was really bad. The Arab World felt it was being passed over by history, left on the sidelines. History, democracy, and freedom were celebrated in Germany, Eastern Europe. The Arab World tyrants were still in power, while elsewhere they were collapsing and executed. The Soviet Union was breaking with its orthodoxy, while a rigid orthodoxy was holding its sway in the Arab World. The Arabs felt weak, being left behind. We can't even stop the Russian Jews from immigrating to Israel.

The Arabs had dreams and resentments. Dreams of a strong unified Arab nation. Resentments over the betrayal of European and American powers and frustrations over the continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Southern Lebanon, and the Golan Heights. They dreamt of a leader who would set history

right again. It was Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt three decades ago, it was Saddam Hussein in 1990.

Saddam not only annexed Kuwait but annexed the dream and resentments of many of the Arab masses and particularly the Palestinians who thought the found to him the "Great Liberator." In the Iraqi leader, despite his brutal past, they saw in him the instrument of redemption as salvation. A second Nasser with teeth.

To many Arabs, the conquest of Kuwait represented by dawn of a new age, a death blow to the old order. Saddam acted out their rage against the West. Saddam struck a responsive chord among the Palestinians with his threats and bravado. The sun had risen again over the old impasse and the Palestinians were looking for deliverance at the hands of a leader who threatened to hit Israel with chemical weapon, to torch "half of the country." The crowd on the West Bank and Gaza did not know exactly what the binary chemical weapons was but they assumed it was a weapon of wonder that would bring the invincible Israelis to heel.

Moreover, Saddam sought to speak to the Arab masses, to appeal to their sense of deprivation relative to the Kuwaitis and Saudis. To many Palestinians and Arab intellectuals Saddam Hussein in the embodiment of Arab frustrations, resentments, dreams, and deprivations. It is equally true that his conquest of Kuwait, its destruction and looting, his depleting of the Iraqi treasury on senseless wars with Iran and the West, his past and recent brutality against his people, befit the posturing that he is the new Saladin, the embodiment of the anguish of the Arab soul.

Though Saddam Hussein betrayed the trust, hopes, and dreams of the Arab masses by his miscalculations and primitive thinking and diplomacy, the issues of injustice are still awaiting fair and just solution.

Down deep in the Arab, and especially Palestinian, psyche, there is a crying longing for justice.

As Arab-Americans of good will this is an area where we can and should exercise some influence. It is becoming increasingly clear not only to us but the bulk of the American public that the outstanding issue in the Middle East must be resolved and resolved soon. That the festering Palestinian-Israeli conflict must be solved with fairness and the New World order, with the resurgence of the U.N., would be a distant dream unless the U.N. and the U.S. bring the same resolution, determination, concerted action to the Palestinian question as they did to the Kuwaiti situation. The real new challenge of the U.N. is the testing ground of the hope of the U.N.

Problems without solutions

By Dr. Abdul Rahim Malhas

IN the Arab World, we have many problems. For a better understanding of these problems, the following is an attempt at classifying them into more comprehensible and manageable categories.

1. Problems with no solutions or "PNS." These are problems one should try to forget and submerge every time they happen to surface into one's concerned awareness. They are characterised by being deeply rooted in our culture, and probably in our DNA. They are chronic diseases whose chances of cure even a genetic optimist can become pessimistic about. Any attempt at tackling these problems is a mere waste of time and energy. A representative sample of PNS is our preoccupation with sex, and a parallel towards life.

2. Nonsolvable problems, or "NSP." These are usually major problems that form the basis of most of our other problems. They are the ones we cannot solve, mainly because we are afraid to solve. They are taboo issues guarded by primitive cats ready to scratch any investigator. Problems in this category are usually closely related to the ones in the first category, or are a logical result of them. In this category you will find the problem of overgrowth.

3. Solvable problems that should not be solved, "SPNS." These are real problems that we train ourselves to look at as simple irritants, and do not attempt to seriously and earnestly solve. They are the kind that, if solved, will create real problems that we always

sought to avoid. After all, they are the problems we have accepted in order to sidetrack other problems that we could not originally manage. In this category sits the problem of our national debt.

4. Solvable problems that cannot be solved, "SPCS." Though it looks very strange, these problems are very real. Think of problems like when you think of this category.

"No matter what classification one chooses, one cannot fully understand the non-solvability of our problems unless one can bring himself to believe that, for cultural reasons, the majority of us do not necessarily differentiate between fact and fantasy."

5. Solvable problems that are not solved, "SPANS." These are simple and small problems that we can solve, but that we do not solve, because we think we can easily solve them at any time, or because we think that time can solve them for us. In this category lies, well, of our problems.

6. Preventable problems, "PP." These are nonexistent problems that we help realise and vitalise, prior to adding them, as new items, to the ones in the previous category. By the way, many of the problems in the aforementioned categories were originally resident in this compartment. Pollution lies here permanently.

7. Problems for others to solve, "POS." These are our biggest problems. These are

problems that we do not like to solve ourselves, and insist that others should for us. Here you find all our problems.

This is only one classification built mainly on the factor of solvability. Different classifications built on either the "psychological" origins of these problems, or their historical-cultural background do exist.

However, no matter what classification one chooses, one cannot fully understand the non-solvability of our problems unless one can bring himself to believe that, for cultural reasons, the majority of us do not necessarily differentiate between fact and fantasy. The real and the surreal blend so easily together in our life, that most of our problems go out of real focus and therefore do not fall on factual retinae.

It is not surprising, therefore, to notice that most of our problems are either in, or shifting to, the nonsolvable categories. This is so because an increasing number of our people are led to believe that our problems are created only because we try to solve them.

The same people believe that efforts made for solving these problems are fruitless, and that it is much better to spare our time and energy for a more rewarding investment. To their mind, all our attention should be directed towards preparing ourselves for another world, the ultimate world, where there is only happiness, and no problems to solve at all!

8. Major problems that should be solved, "MPS." These are problems that should be solved, before other problems can be solved. In this category you find the same list as in the first category.

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* جزيرة رودس
تبدأ ٧/١٢ ٧/١٥
الاقامة في فنادق سياحية وخصم

٢. ايسلندا وجزيرة رومانيا
٢ رحلات كل يوم جمعة الى كورفو وبيسكوس

٣. ايطاليا
١٢ رحلة تضم زيارة الاندلس / ملقا / ومدريد يوم ٧/١١

٤. ايطاليا
كل يوم احد زيارة روما / فينيس / فلورنس / كاري

٥. اسطنبول وقبرص
رحلة خاصة الى النيبيا / شمال ايطاليا وسويسرا

٦. ايطاليا
رحلة خاصة الى اليونان وقبرص يوم ٧/١٢

٧. ايطاليا
رحلة خاصة الى ليسان يوم ٧/٢٠

٨. ايسلندا والجزر
كل يوم جمعة

٩. ايسلندا وكورفو
٧/١٥ رحلات الى ايسلندا وكورفو من

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(From left to right) striking shops, writings on the wall and a young man waits for a job opportunity (photos by Debbie Lovatt)

Chalking it up on the wall

By Debbie Lovatt
Special to the Jordan Times

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

The walls in the Arab quarter of the walled city of old Jerusalem are covered in plain or colorful, artistic graffiti. On some walls the writing is in support of the various movements for the liberation of Palestine. In other places the Palestinian flag (banned by Israel) has been daubed, and there are slogans in certain areas saying "long live Saddam Hussein."

In old Jerusalem the Palestinian uprising, which is better known as intifada, now half way through its fourth year, goes unnoticed by many tourists. Very few foreign visitors to the holy land are able to read the Arabic graffiti and others are unaware of the regular half-day strikes.

Tourists can frequently be heard whilst walking down the narrow deserted streets asking each other: "Why are all the shops shut?"

"They find their own answers adequate and assume that either this is normal and the way it has always been, or, if there is a fully-day strike, it is a religious holiday."

Recently there has been much speculation that the intifada was all but over. This is strongly denied by Palestinians living under the Israeli occupation. But there is an admission amongst some that the idea remains firm but the means of implementing it need to change due to the harsh economic situation provoked by the Gulf war which practically destroyed tourism in the region.

In one of the numerous souvenir shops in the old city walls of Jerusalem, 21. He admits that business is "bad" and that the "Palestinians are suffering a lot because of the intifada and the strikes."

"We don't mind losing money through striking. It is one way to fight and if we don't fight they (the Israelis) will kill us anyway," said Abdullah, referring to the curtailed basic human rights and freedoms under the 24-year-long Israeli occupation.

Striking is a peaceful protest. Shops are rarely open all day. Most days there is a half-day stoppage with shops open for four hours from 9 a.m. Tourism previously generated enough income for people relying on this industry. This is no longer the case.

The strikes are, however, not fully adhered to. Shops may be shut and the doors locked, but goods on display outside remain for sale. Also, in some streets, shopkeepers loiter beside their pushed-to-shop doors and ask passing tourists if they want to look inside.

Any tourist who buys from the Arab quarter now will almost invariably be told that he is the first customer that day or since a few days. Tourists do well. Merchants are so desperate to sell they no longer employ their infamous tactic of starting at double the actual price in an attempt to make an enormous profit.

"No one wants to come to this part of the old city now," complained Abdullah, adding: "Tourists are told things that aren't true, like this part of Jerusalem is not safe."

On the wall opposite Abdullah's shop there are two sets of graffiti. The writing in red paint is for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the scrawl in black is in support of Fatah, the biggest, mainstream Palestinian group. There is a motif to Hamas on the next shop door. Apparently Fatah is the most popular movement.

Abdullah said: "This does

not mean that we are divided. Everyone is together in this struggle for liberation. We know that if we divide we will forget the main issue and what our fight is for."

Karim is the 30-year-old proprietor of the largest souvenir shop here. Most days he can be seen sitting outside his shop with a couple of his cronies doing nothing.

The economic situation is "bad, today is better than tomorrow," said Karim. "We have to pay 60 per cent tax on things we buy. Food is very expensive and the prices are going up all the time."

Karim speaks for many when he says: "The world has forgotten us. Why does the world help the Kuwaitis and the Kurds but not us? Why were United Nations resolutions concerning Iraq and Kuwait enforced while resolutions concerning Israel are not implemented?"

When the strike starts at 1 p.m., Karim goes home. "We are afraid to walk in the streets because they (Israeli soldiers) may take you and you don't know where you'll end up. Many people are sick and tired from the stress. It is safer to go home and stay there. We can't do anything because of the soldiers. For example, the symbol for Palestine is an olive tree. Silversmiths make them and we wear it on a chain. If the soldiers see us wearing it we get into trouble," he explained.

Majid is an out of work 23-year-old. His most recent job was as a waiter in a Dead Sea hotel. But "during the Gulf crisis no tourists came, the hotels were closing down so there was no work any more," he whispered, whilst looking around nervously and asking if he could talk in a cafe rather than in the open street.

The clean but cramped tentable cafe he chose had two other customers. "This used to be always full, it's the best cafe in the old city, but look how it's empty now," said Majid gesturing at the empty red formica-topped tables.

Majid has two brothers. One works as a nurse in a hospital in the West Bank, and the other, in the words of Majid,

"got angry with the intifada and said he didn't like hearing bad news every day so he found himself an American girlfriend and they flew to the U.S. And he's been there ever since. I also wanted to leave and go abroad to make a good future, but the Israelis wouldn't let me go. They say it's not allowed, I don't know why. They say they need proper proof I'll return."

Since the intifada started Majid has been arrested seven times. "Once," he recalled, "one afternoon, I was walking on my own in the street and the soldiers took me. They took me to jail. They put me with about 500 people in a big place and then the soldiers beat us with sticks and guns and kicked us with their feet. After six or seven hours they let us go home."

A lot of people joke about prison saying: "Prison is good because when they let you out you think you are free."

Like a lot of boys his age, Majid spends a lot of time on his own. "It's safer to be on your own, so I come to the cafe and sit doing nothing. Sometimes even the cafes aren't safe though. One time I was sitting here doing nothing and the soldiers came and took everyone to jail. I don't do anything for the intifada. I don't speak about politics. In the beginning I used to, but now I'm really afraid."

All this young man wants is "to be happy, to have a nice wife, a nice house, some money and to be free to go where I want without having to always be showing my identity card and being afraid. I want the intifada finished soon with a good solution for both sides. I don't know what kind of solution though because I'm (living right here) in the middle of things."

Talking with people in the old city for only five minutes each would leave one with the impression that Palestinians have total conviction about fighting for the restoration of all of their historical land.

However, 20 minutes of conversation or so, they climb down from their positions. One shopkeeper said: "We want a separate state in the

West Bank, for example, because we know what the Jews went through in the past and everyone has the right to live somewhere in peace. But we cannot live like this without any rights."

The slogan "land for peace" is often voiced, but is followed by an assumption that rights will be restored concurrently with land.

Omair works with tourists as a guide around the old city and anywhere else visitors want to go. He believes that the restoration of human rights should come before land and that land would follow. "Once we have our rights we will be less frustrated and this will reduce the feelings of aggression we have," he said sipping a cup of Turkish coffee because the too wanted to talk away from the eyes of the Israeli soldiers standing at the top of the steps leading down to Damascus Gate and on top of a building overlooking it.

Fear of the Israeli soldiers and arrest runs high. After the shops close at 1 p.m. until sunset the streets contain fewer and fewer people. Only young children play outside near their homes. After sunset the Arab quarter is quiet and lone footsteps echo in the twilight.

In the early hours of the morning the only footsteps to be heard in the old city belong to soldiers or tourists returning to their hostels after a few drinks in the new city.

One American tourist with dark hair and non-Caucasian looks was stopped by soldiers on his way back late one night. "Show me your identification card," demanded one soldier aggressively. The tourist took out his U.S. passport. "What are you doing here? Do you know you're in the Arab quarter and it's not safe?" fired another soldier. The slightly tipsy young American explained he was staying in this part of town and was just going back to sleep. The soldiers told him it would be better and safer if he stayed in the new city. "I study Arabic. I want to be here where it's friendly and the new city is too expensive anyway," said the student before going on his way.

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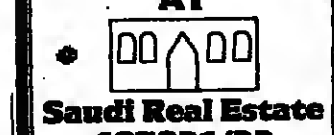
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Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE Date: 28/6/91	TOKYO CLOSE Date: 1/7/91
Sterling Pound	1.6220	1.6216
Deutsche Mark	1.8105	1.8103
Swiss Franc	1.5525	1.5551
French Franc	6.1360	6.1396**
Japanese Yen	137.45	137.84
European Currency Unit	1.1355	1.1345**

USD Per STG.
European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT.

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	6.06	6.06	6.37	6.75
Sterling Pound	11.50	11.25	10.75	10.68
Deutsche Mark	8.87	9.06	9.25	9.25
Swiss Franc	7.87	7.93	7.87	7.68
French Franc	9.62	9.62	9.62	9.43
Japanese Yen	7.50	7.56	7.43	7.31
European Currency Unit	9.84	10.00	10.06	9.87

Interbank bid rates for spot, excluding 1% dollar, 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	369.50	7.00	Silver	4.48	.10

31 Karat Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 1/7/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.687	.689
Sterling Pound	1.1098	1.1153
Deutsche Mark	.3784	.3803
Swiss Franc	.4409	.4431
French Franc	.1116	.1122
Japanese Yen	.4964	.5009
Dutch Guilder	.3358	.3375
Swedish Krona	.1048	.1053
Italian Lira	.0509	.0512
Belgian Franc	.01840	.01849

Per 100 Other Currencies Date: 1/7/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8000	1.8250
Lebanese Lira	.0755	.0770
Saudi Riyal	.1826	.1835
Kuwaiti Dinar	.1860	.1870
Qatari Riyal	.1860	.1870
Egyptian Pound	.1900	.2050
Omani Riyal	1.7600	1.7800
UAE Dirham	.1860	.1870
Greek Drachma	.3430	.3495
Cypriot Pound	1.3850	1.4150

Per 100 CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	26/6/91	Close	30/6/91	Close
All-Share	112.95		112.55	
Banking Sector	106.03		107.05	
Insurance Sector	117.22		118.03	
Industry Sector	117.76		118.34	
Services Sector	131.36		129.80	

December 31, 1990 = 100

Iraqis look for staples, consumer items in Jordan

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Iraqi businessmen are flooding Jordan in search for arrangements to import food and consumer products for Iraq, while in Baghdad itself middlemen and brokers are deluged with inquiries.

The focus for immediate imports is mostly staples and basic consumer products such as batteries, soap, cigarettes, detergents, toothpaste etc. but many businessmen are also involved in setting a system in place under which they could rush capital goods and spare parts as well as raw materials for Iraqi industries as and when there is a relaxation of the international sanctions imposed on their country for its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Businessmen point out that reaching definite deals and actual deliveries could take anywhere between four and six months from the time of initial contacts. "If we could start the process now, hopefully we can get deliveries in a relatively short period after the sanctions are lifted," said an Iraqi businessman.

Jordanian security sources said border controls had been tightened and many attempts to smuggle goods across in Iraq were foiled. The Kingdom has said that it is abiding by the sanctions against Iraq and rejected charges

that it has reached new trade agreements with its eastern neighbour.

"Jordan is about the only country which is keeping a tight watch on the flow of goods into Iraq not covered by the relaxation of the sanctions," said an Iraqi importer of tea. "It is a totally different story with Turkey, Iran and Syria. It is a free-for-all there, and many Turks, Iranians and Syrians would emerge as millionaires by the time the sanctions are fully lifted; that is if that ever happens."

The Iraqi government, straining under the sweeping sanctions, has done away with most regulations related to imports, clearing the way for rich Iraqi businessmen with funds outside the country to find sources and meet the country's basic needs.

At the same time, many of the importers are also wary of any sudden government move to reimpose control over any sector, particularly food, and set price ceilings, possibly at lower-than-actual-cost levels.

"There is a tremendous market out there," said an Asian businessman. "But the problem is uncertainty within the country and the international sanctions," he said.

In many cases, Iraqi importers are looking for medium-term deliveries — depending on sanctions restrictions — of much-needed raw material for industrial units. Plastics, cloth, bulk

chemicals for medicine, components for electrical appliances, cables, fuses, raw rubber and plumbing fixtures are some of the most-wanted items.

The main preoccupation of the government of President Saddam Hussein, the ruling Baathist Party and the National Assembly (parliament) is with fighting runaway inflation and ensuring the availability of basic products.

The list of products subsidised but rationed by the government now include flour, rice, sugar, tea, detergent, cooking oil, soap, salt, children's milk, tomato paste, canned cheese, canned meat, eggs, dried milk, dairy products, pasta and school items. Most of these products are now imported from Jordan, but the relaxed import procedures have also brought in a wide array of items, including Pepsi Cola from Lebanon and Coca Cola from the United Arab Emirates.

The ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), chaired by President Saddam, has written off all water, electricity and telephone service bills for the period Jan. 17 to June 1 in a bid to allow the people to meet their needs of food and basic products.

Wheat and rice import deals already agreed with Canada, Australia and Thailand could materialise only when the freeze on Iraqi assets and bank accounts frozen abroad under the sanctions is lifted.

India, which is owed around \$500 million by Iraq in pre-war credits, has offered to supply food and medicines under normal credit terms as what an Indian official described as "help in this dire situation facing the Iraqi people."

Efforts are underway to repair cement factories and resume the production of cement, vital for reconstructing war-damaged buildings. Simultaneously, the industry and militarisation ministry has also launched work at tyre plants and battery manufacturing industries. There is no definite information on the progress of these efforts.

Most of these facilities were gutted in the allied bombing during the war while some others were damaged during post-war rebellions by the Kurds in the north and the Shi'ites in the south.

In the meantime, reports from Iraq suggest that average Iraqis are finding it extremely difficult to meet their basic needs. The rationed/subsidised items are not enough, and market prices have gone up by as much as 250 per cent from the pre-war levels.

Confessionaries, clothing, tyres and automobile spare parts (whatever is available) are beyond the reach of an average Iraqi, whose monthly income is estimated at around 160 Iraqi dinars (around \$500 at the official exchange rate but worth less than \$30 in the actual market).

Soviet reform plan proposes six steps to market economy

MOSCOW (R) — A radical reform plan drawn up by a Russian economist and U.S. experts has called for six basic steps, including private ownership of property and most state enterprises, to transform a Soviet economy in decline.

Soviet economic figures released Monday showed oil production declining in the first five months of this year and food and consumer goods shortages continuing.

"In the next six months, and for the year as a whole, the situation will be worse than in 1990," the main Communist Party daily Pravda said, referring to empty shop shelves.

A final draft of a seven-year plan distributed to journalists in Moscow said that without radical reform the Soviet Union faced protracted hyper-inflation accompanied by sharp declines in output.

The plan, known as the window of opportunity, was formulated by Russian economist Grigory Yavlinsky and a group of U.S. economists. It is geared towards attracting substantial Western support for its step-by-step initiatives.

President Mikhail Gorbachev

will combine the proposal with the Soviet government's anti-crisis programme and use it to back his case for support at a meeting with leaders of the Group of Seven major industrial nations in London later this month.

The plan proposed six reform initiatives: — Legalisation of basic economic rights beginning with the ownership of property, including in agriculture.

Privatisation of the vast majority of state enterprises. Most small-scale assets would be sold at auctions.

— Demonopolisation, so that new enterprises can be created and all enterprises can compete.

— Budgetary and monetary stabilisation through rapid cuts in subsidies and spending for the military-industrial complex.

— Liberalisation of prices to allow them to be determined by market forces of supply and demand.

— Normalisation of international trade through the acceptance of established international trading practices including a convertible currency.

The programme comprises two periods and envisages a stable economy with an ownership pat-

tern similar to that of Western Europe by 1997.

In the first period (1991-1993), legal and economic institutions of the market economy would be created and a considerable portion of state property privatised.

In the second period (1994-1997), transformation focuses on structural adjustment, accelerating shifts from public to private ownership, from military to civilian industry, and from heavy industry to production of consumer goods.

The scale of Western assistance would be related, not only to the implementation of these step-by-step reforms, but also to the Soviet Union's progress in democratisation.

"Specific financing requirements will be the subject of intensive study and constant review once the reform process is underway," it said.

Underlining the sorry state of the Soviet economy, Pravda said clothing and footwear were in short supply and warned of food shortages.

The city of Moscow received 54,000 tonnes less meat and 250,000 tonnes less milk than required in the first five months of this year, it said.

An official from the state statistics office, Goskomstat, said oil production, the country's main hard currency earner, fell by nine per cent in the first five months of the year, to 220.5 million tonnes.

An expert from the Soviet Academy of Sciences said this year's oil output, at 528 million tonnes, would be the lowest for more than a decade.



King Hassan launches work on Africa's 2nd biggest dam

FEZ, Morocco (R) — King Hassan launched work on Africa's second biggest dam which Morocco hopes will prevent flooding, irrigate parched farmland and generate electric power.

The king named the dam Wabada (unity) at a ceremony in Mjara on the Sebou river, 30 kilometres north of Fez.

With a rampart formed from the 30 million cubic metres of earth, the dam will be Africa's largest after Aswan on the Nile in Egypt when it is finished in 1997.

It will cost about 6.5 billion dirhams (\$840 million) and is being financed by Italy, Spain, the Soviet Union and Arab funds.

About 20,000 farmers will need to be resettled from the upper Sebou and Ouergha valleys, which will be flooded by a 30-kilometre long reservoir.

The dam will irrigate 100,000 hectares (250,000 acres) in the Gharb valley, and generate 400 million kilowatt-hours of electric power a year.

World Bank lending hits record \$24.2b

WASHINGTON (AP) — New loans approved by the World Bank, the largest source of aid for the Third World, hit a record \$24.2 billion in the past year.

That was up from \$22.7 billion the previous year, according to a review made public Monday.

Mr. Moeen Qureshi, a senior vice president, said that lending to eastern Europe rose from \$500 million two years ago to nearly \$3 billion this past year. Poland got \$1.4 billion, lending in Romania was resumed while Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia got loans for the first time.

Additional lending because of the Gulf war was put at more than \$1.4 billion for the 12 months.

But reducing poverty is the bank's main object, said President Barber Conable at a news conference.

The way to do that is to make Third World economies grow, said Mr. Conable, adding that the private sector is one of the focuses for stimulating growth.

Mr. Conable has been under pressure from President George Bush's administration to give more help to private businesses with some resistance from other countries. The United States is the bank's biggest stockholder.

Albania is expected to join the bank and its sister organisation, the International Monetary Fund, in the fall. The United States has opposed the Soviet Union's membership.

The bank's earnings, not yet announced, are expected to be near \$1 billion.

The bulk of the loans came from the bank's International Bank for Reconstruction and Development which approved \$16.4 billion worth — up \$1.2 billion. The International Development Association which lends to the poorest countries from a donor fund, approved \$6.3 billion in new loans — up \$800 million.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) which lends to private business rather than to governments, approved \$1.5 billion. The official figure was not yet available, but appeared to be about the same as the year before. Lending was stagnant because the IFC was awaiting an increase in its capital.

That was approved by representatives of member governments on Friday, so loans are expected to rise about \$150 million in the coming year.

India was the biggest total borrower — \$2 billion — followed by Mexico, which got \$1.8 billion. Mr. Qureshi said there were significant increases in lending for human resources such as schools and women's development. Loans amounted to almost \$4 billion.

New emphasis was also put on the environment, with the bank requiring all projects be checked for their environmental effects. Loans related to the environment were put at \$8.8 billion.

Japan cuts key discount rate

TOKYO (AP) — The Bank of Japan, trying to stimulate the economy by reversing an inflation-fighting policy of tight credit, lowered its discount rate Monday by half a percentage point to 5.5 per cent.

The cut in the lending rate to commercial banks, the first since February 1987, took effect immediately.

"Today's decision was made in order to continue sustaining steady growth led by domestic demands while maintaining price stability," the bank said in a statement.

The bank had boosted the discount rate five times since May 1989, when it rose from 2.5 per cent to 3.25 per cent. The higher rates ended an era of easy credit that helped fuel a robust expansion of the Japanese economy and facilitated massive overseas investment.

But the economy, which grew at 5.7 per cent in the fiscal year that ended March 31, is expected to slow to 3.8 per cent growth this year.

"It was high time for the bank to act in lowering its key lending rate," said Mr. Hirokazu Kawai, a senior economist at Nikko Research Centre. "If it had failed to do so now, there was a possibility of a quickly worsening economic slowdown."

Mr. Kenneth Courtis, senior economist at Deutsche Bank Group in Tokyo, said the rate reduction was designed to restore confidence in the market after the debacle of the preceding week, when the presidents of two huge brokerages resigned because of a widening scandal into shady dealings.

The questionable practices include offering huge compensation to favoured clients for investment losses and deals linked to the mob.

Mr. Courtis also said a lower discount rate was needed to prevent a "very sharp fall" in capital investment, which is a main engine driving the economy.

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Warsaw Pact formally dissolves

PRAGUE, Czechoslovakia (AP) — The Warsaw Pact was dissolved Monday as representatives of the six remaining members signed documents disbanding the once-powerful alliance binding the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

"Our decision of today is indeed a historic one," said Czechoslovak President Václav Havel. "We are saying goodbye to the era when Europe was divided by ideological intolerance."

Havel, the dissident playwright jailed after the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion crushed the "Prague Spring" reforms, presided at the last meeting of the Warsaw Pact Political Committee.

Also attending the ceremony were Polish President Lech Wałęsa, the former Solidarity leader, and delegations from Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union.

The Warsaw Pact was formed on May 14, 1955 at the height of postwar East-West tensions. West Germany had joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation days before, and the Soviets built the Warsaw Pact on fears of a third world war.

The Pact's demise came less than two years after Poland cre-

ated the first non-Communist government in the East Bloc during the summer of 1989 and started a wave of democratic revolutions through Eastern Europe.

Monday's dissolution formally cut the last of the ties that bound the satellite countries in the Soviet Union's postwar orbit. The Warsaw Pact's military structures ended on April 1, and the Soviet-led trade bloc, Comecon, was disbanded last week in Budapest.

The former East Germany had already pulled out of the Warsaw Pact will unify last October. Breaking with Moscow, Albania quit the pact in 1968 to protest the Czechoslovak invasion.

The last Soviet troops have withdrawn from Czechoslovakia and Hungary in recent weeks, but remain in Poland and Eastern Germany.

The Warsaw Pact's dissolution has left NATO to redefine its purpose. No longer in a military us-against-them confrontation, leaders of the Western alliance say NATO still needs to exist because of security concerns about ethnic tensions, waves of economic refugees and potential unrest in the Soviet Union.

The former members of the Warsaw Pact also have been left with unresolved security concerns. NATO has not invited their membership, but has said any effort to curtail their new freedoms would be viewed with concern by the alliance.

On Sunday, Rock star Frank Zappa and former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger took part in nationwide celebrations in Hungary marking the withdrawal of the last Soviet troops earlier this month.

Hungarians and their foreign guests, including the mayors of Prague, Czechoslovakia and Vilnius, Lithuania, toasted the end of 46 years of occupation by the Red Army. The celebrations, which included folk dance, rock and jazz concerts, came nearly 35 years after Soviet troops crushed an anti-Communist uprising in October.

The last Soviet forces left Hungary two weeks ago, completing a withdrawal of troops agreed upon by Moscow and Hungary's last Communist government just before the country's first post-World War II free elections in March 1990.

The last Soviet soldier to leave on June 19 was Lt. Gen. Viktor

Shilov, commander of the Red Army in Hungary. During the past 15 months, more than 50,000 troops, 860 tanks, 600 pieces of mobile artillery and an unknown number of short-range rockets have been pulled out of Hungary.

The moves reflect the Kremlin's shrinking military presence across Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union has agreed to withdraw its forces from Czechoslovakia by June 30. Some Red Army troops have departed Poland and Eastern Germany.

On Sunday, Hungarian politicians toasted the country's freedom at various fetes and stressed the importance of building future friendship on a new basis with the Soviet Union.

"Now with our hands unshackled, we can extend a hand in friendship to the Soviet Union," Hungarian Foreign Minister Geza Jeszenszky said in an interview Sunday for the state radio.

In an official statement released by the Hungarian news agency, the government called on Hungarians to exercise "determination and patience."

"Sovereignty not only sets us free, but also shifts on us the whole weight of responsibility for our fate," the government said.

Angolan rivals start demobilisation

LUENA, Angola (AP) — The second stage of Angola's truce begins Monday as government and rebel troops are fused into a single 50,000-man national army and the remaining 150,000 are demobilised.

One of the gathering points will be this pretty colonial-style town where the last battle of the 16-year civil war was fought six weeks ago.

Government troops stationed in the area will gather outside the town and 26 other points around this southern African nation. Rebels will do the same at 23 other staging areas, according to the truce.

The truce entered another stage over the weekend when representatives of the ruling party paid a symbolic first visit to the headquarters of rebel leader Jonas Savimbi in the bush camp of Jamba. Joining them were members of the international commission that will monitor the peace accord, including representatives from the United States and Soviet Union.

Savimbi said after private talks Sunday that both sides were committed to the peace accords and to holding elections as scheduled in September 1992. "If the process is delayed, I think it will be almost impossible to put it on track again," he added.

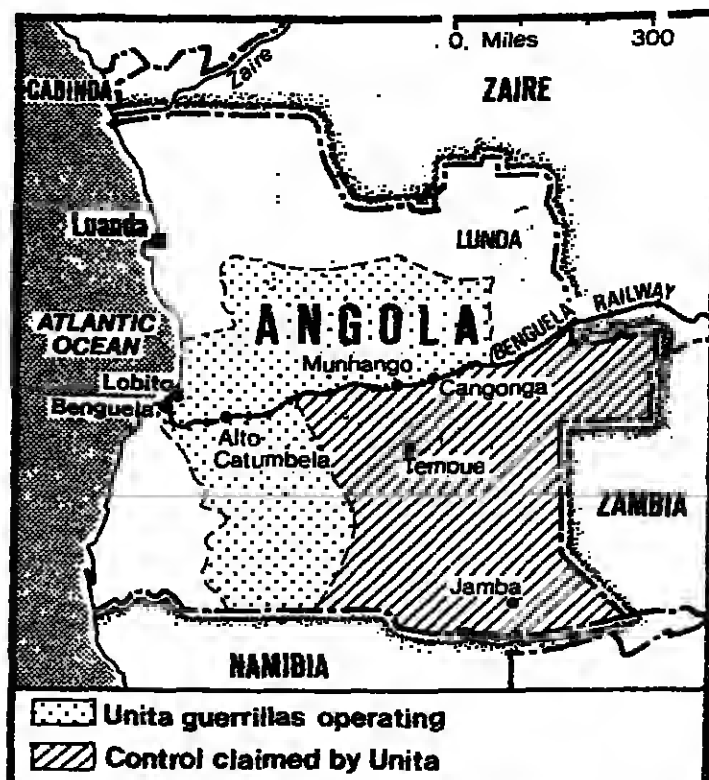
"We have wounds on our body, wounds on our heart, even wounds on our soul. Now it's up to us to heal those wounds," said Lopo de Nascimento, the government's chief delegate on the ceasefire commission.

Luena, 500 miles (800 kilometres) east of the capital of Luanda, is an example of the vast changes brought by the May 31 peace accords.

Luena was the site of the final firefight, a 45-day artillery siege in which more than 500 civilians perished.

Shelling stopped on May 15 when both sides agreed to an informal ceasefire ahead of the signing of peace accords by President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos and Savimbi, leader of UNITA, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.

The track from the government army garrison to the advance base of the U.S.-backed UNITA movement now throngs with people carrying their meager goods to market and with officers from both sides who greet



each other with smiles and handshakes.

But there is an ever-present danger in the town, said Col. Agostinho Sanjaro, the army's chief representative to a regional commission overseeing the ceasefire.

"Here the forces are very close together, and you have the greatest concentration of troops in Angola. Fortunately, we have a good understanding here," he said.

Sanjaro is a frequent visitor to the headquarters of Brig. Geraldo Abreu, his rebel counterpart on the commission.

"We get on very well, it's all very friendly," Abreu said at his windswept camp that once housed some of the 50,000 soldiers Cuba sent in 1975 in support of the then-Marxist government's war against UNITA.

Nevertheless, both commanders are anxious to restrict mingling between soldiers from the two armies. "At the level of the common soldier... we think that after 16 years of war, contact could lead to irresponsible words," Abreu said.

When UNITA troops drive into Luena in their U.S.- or South

African-supplied jeeps, they are surrounded by crowds of curious onlookers, most are children, but there are also soldiers eager to get a close look at their old enemies.

"So far, there have been no serious incidents, everything is going well," said Maj. Vladimir Mikic, a Yugoslav on a five-man United Nations verification mission based in Luena.

They are part of a 350-member U.N. force to monitor the ceasefire.

Further international guarantees are provided by Portugal, the former colonial power that granted Angola independence in November 1975, and the United States and the Soviet Union, who for years kept the proxy war going with generous arms supplies.

The three nations mediated year-long peace talks that led to the ceasefire.

The next step in the truce is the release of all prisoners of war during August.

Meanwhile, 150,000 soldiers returning to civilian life and an estimated 400,000 Angolan refugees are expected to put further strain on aid workers already struggling to cope with 700,000 internally displaced people.

Rebels kidnap officials in Assam

GUWAHATI, India (R) — Suspected Maoist guerrillas in the northeast state of Assam kidnaped four Indian officials Monday, police said.

They said one senior civil servant was snatched near the Assam capital of Guwahati and another in the town of Mangaldai about 100 km (60 miles) to the north.

In Jorhat, about 250 km (155 miles) away, a medical officer of a state-run oil company and a telecommunications engineer were also kidnapped, they added.

Senior police officials said they suspected the United Front for the Liberation of Assam

(ULFA), which is fighting for an independent state, was responsible.

The kidnappings in Assam followed a series of abductions in another border state, Kashmir, where a revolt against Indian rule erupted in January, 1990.

One Kashmiri group was holding an Israeli tourist who escaped from another separatist organisation after six Israeli hostages fought back against their abductors in a gunfight last Thursday.

One tourist and one militant were killed in the shooting.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) said it was willing to hand Israeli Yair Yit-

zhaki to a United Nations official.

There has been no response so far from either the Indian government or the United Nations.

Another Kashmiri group set a Monday afternoon deadline for the government to agree to swap K. Doraiswamy, a Bombay-based executive of another state-owned oil firm, for three jailed colleagues.

The militants said they would kill Doraiswamy, snatched Friday, if their demand were not met.

A third Kashmir militant group has held two Swedish engineers since March 31.

Zaire opposition determined to oust Mobutu

KINSHASA, Zaire (AP) — Nine years of detention, house arrest, banishment and torture have made opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi even more determined not to rest until President Mobutu Sese Seko is gone.

"Everything that Mobutu created and imposed on the people of Zaire is going to go out with him," he said in an interview.

Tshisekedi was co-founder with Mobutu of the ruling popular movement for the revolution in 1966 and served as interior minister. He was arrested in 1981 after he and 13 other former National Assembly members signed a letter criticising the president.

Zaire's newly unshackled press published the letter in May.

Among the aims of his Union for Democracy and Social Progress, Tshisekedi said, are restoring the country's former name, the Congo, and the flag adopted when it became independent of Belgium in 1960.

Leon Moukanda Lunyama, publisher of the independent newspaper Umoja, attacks the president in virtually every issue. "Mobutu must disappear with everything he created," he told an interviewer, pounding his fist on the table.

Although Mobutu has lifted restrictions on the press and opposition parties, the editor of a leading newspaper is in jail. Police break up rallies, for which permission is required in the first place. Security forces are accused of killing dozens of students and other anti-government demonstrators.

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Opinion split on durability of Liberian Pact

YAMOUSSOUKRO, Ivory Coast (R) — Liberia's two rival leaders have agreed to work together to end 18 months of civil war, but opinion was divided on whether the pact is a breakthrough or a red herring.

Interim President Amos Sawyer and rebel leader Charles Taylor embraced Sunday in Ivory Coast's diplomatic capital Yamoussoukro and vowed they would cooperate to end a conflict which has killed thousands and effectively partitioned Liberia.

The agreement was announced after a regional mini-summit chaired by veteran Ivorian President Felix Houphouët-Boigny, the first meeting to assemble all the major regional players in the conflict.

"Dr. Sawyer and I are Liberians," Taylor said in a statement. "We will work together to bring peace."

Holding their linked hand aloft in front of the five West African heads of state, Sawyer and Taylor said a commission would be set up to agree specific points in the accord.

But details of the pact remained vague, with Taylor insisting at a news conference it was Houphouët-Boigny's prerogative to announce full results of a meeting which lasted barely two hours.

"We were received today as President Taylor and President Sawyer," he said.

"I can say very clearly — and I'm sure Mr. Sawyer will quote in a similar way — that I am President of the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly (NPRA) government. It may be far enough for Mr. Sawyer to say he is president of where he is."

The NPRA is Taylor's rebel administration run from the central Liberian town of Gbarnga. Taylor controls some 90 per cent of the war-ravaged West African country, including its timber and mineral resources, and has always rejected Sawyer as interim leader.

Sawyer holds only the capital Monrovia, but his interim government has the backing of the Organisation of African Unity.

Taylor said both parties had agreed to elections at an unspecified date. He gave no details.

Ivorian officials and government leaders were unavailable for comment. Also taking part in the mini-summit were Presidents Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria, Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, Dawda Jawara of Gambia and Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo.

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Column Diana leads royal popularity poll

LONDON (AP) — Princess Diana is the most popular member of the British royal family, according to two polls released Monday, her 30th birthday.

A Gallup poll conducted for the Daily Telegraph, showed Diana has moved ahead of her husband, Prince Charles, in the nation's affections. Between June 19 and 25 Gallup asked 985 adults, "who is your favourite member of the royal family?" Diana's popularity almost doubled since a similar poll in 1988, with 22 per cent now listing her as their favourite, up from 12 per cent. Respondents described Diana as fashionable, caring and charming, but few people thought she was intelligent, the Telegraph said.

Charles dropped to NO 2 with 15 per cent, down six points from 1988, the Telegraph said. His sister Anne also had 15 per cent, the queen mother had 14 per cent, and the queen 12 per cent. A separate Gallup poll conducted for legal and general insurance company surveyed 500 married women.

Almost a third nominated Diana as their favourite, and praised her as a good ambassador and mother. Most of the wives also thought Diana should receive a payment from the government for her services to the nation. The recommendations for her annual income ranged from nil to more than £5 million (\$8 million), with £900,000 (\$1.44 million) being the average figure.

Further international guarantees are provided by Portugal, the former colonial power that granted Angola independence in November 1975, and the United States and the Soviet Union, who for years kept the proxy war going with generous arms supplies.

The three nations mediated year-long peace talks that led to the ceasefire.

The next step in the truce is the release of all prisoners of war during August.

Meanwhile, 150,000 soldiers returning to civilian life and an estimated 400,000 Angolan refugees are expected to put further strain on aid workers already struggling to cope with 700,000 internally displaced people.

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